Six families needed to host KSKK youth exchange kids. PAGE 3
Jury trial for man accused of license fraud begins. PAGE 4

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 133
THURSDAY JULY 6, 2023
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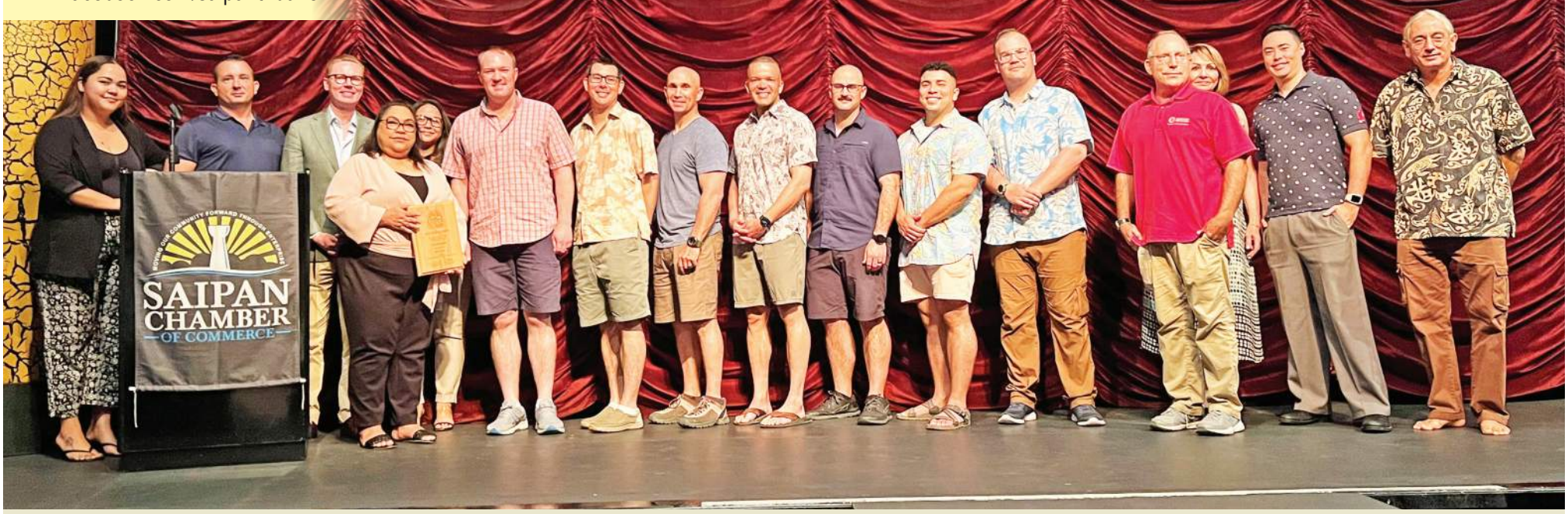

AHOY SAILORS

MARK RABAGO

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, led by vice president Joshua Wise, gives a plaque of recognition to the crew of the U.S. guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn*, under commanding officer Matthew Hays, during yesterday's Saipan Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. The 315-crew U.S. Navy ship will leave Saipan today. Also in photo is Hyatt general manager Simon Graf.

UN agency endorses Japan's plan to release nuke water into Pacific

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO (AP)—The U.N. nuclear agency gave its endorsement on Tuesday to Japan's planned release of treated radioactive wastewater into the sea from the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant, saying it meets international standards and its environmental and health impact would be negligible.

The plan is opposed by groups in South Korea, China and some Pacific Island nations because of safety concerns and political reasons. Local fishing organizations

See NUKE on Page 4

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN

Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:

86

CBMA: Free medical, vet services this month

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Good news from the Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs: The U.S. Department of Defense, through its Innovative Readiness Training program, will provide free medical and veterinary services to the people of the CNMI starting next week.

Serving as one of the guest speakers at yesterday's Saipan Chamber of Commerce

See CBMA on Page 4

2 winners in LibDay float contest

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After an eventful 77th Liberation Day parade that featured 44 parade contingents and 15 floats in all, two floats were eventually named winners in the float competition, with the Kagman Agricultural Farms and Producers Association and the Department of Corrections winning in their respective divisions.

KAFPA won the Nonprofit Organization Division, while DOC was the winner of the

See LIBDAY on Page 4

'Most gaming materials at casino site are gone'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Most of the gaming materials at the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's casino site in Garapan are now gone, according to Commonwealth Casino Commission vice chair Rafael S. Demapan.

Demapan

Speaking at CCC's board meeting last Thursday, Demapan, who was the at the time the acting board chair, also disclosed that the fifth auction of IPI's gaming property will be done sometime this September.

He said the CCC board continues to visit the

See CASINO on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
McDonald's of Guam and Saipan breaks ground on a new location in Mangilao village in Guam.
PAGE 11

ASIA
The Taliban are banning beauty salons in Afghanistan, in a latest curb on women's freedoms.
PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
Eating superstar Joey "Jaws" Chestnut wins again at Fourth of July hot dog eating contest
PAGE 15

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Local

Tenorio hopes CPUC will do a 'good' study on CHCC rates

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board chair Janice A. Tenorio hopes that the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission will do a "good" study on a Senate bill that would mandate CUC to change the power, water, and wastewater rate of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. from the current government rate to the lower commercial rate.

With CPUC doing the study, Tenorio said they can then help CUC regulate the rates and not pass on these extra rates to ordinary consumers.

"That's why there is a government rate….to actually not have the consumers [and businesses'] pay the additional costs," she said in an interview on Monday.

Tenorio said the Senate bill does no favors for CUC because the utilities agency will be losing that source of revenue. If the bill is enacted into a law, it will only be advantageous to the hospital, she said.

"People say that there's a lot of leaks, that we are [not doing] maintenance. But that's where the money is. When agencies don't pay and people don't pay, then we don't have the money to conduct the maintenance," she added.

Tenorio said they have grant money for certain projects, but also need money to do maintenance.

Last June 23, the Senate passed the legislation, Senate Bill 23-37, SD1. It is now with a committee in the House of Representatives.

Tenorio acknowledges that, while the bill will be bad for CUC, it's also good for CHCC because the hospital owes CUC $59 million and will thus be charged a lower rate.

She also concedes that CHCC has they've been complying with the memorandum of agreement it signed with CUC and the hospital corporation is in good standing now.

She believes that, whatever rate structure the CPUC will come up with, the most important thing is that decisions are made based on what's best for the entire community and as long as it doesn't pass additional costs to the consumers and businesses.

"I think that's the goal," Tenorio said.

Hofschneider set to attend NACD conservation forum in N. Dakota

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) and a Senate staff will be attending the National Association of Conservation Districts Summer Conservation Forum and Tour in Bismack, North Dakota, from July 15 to 19, 2023.

Hofschneider

NACD chief executive officer Jeremy Peters invited Hofschneider to attend the forum and tour, which according to him, will bring together over 400 conservation leaders from federal, state, territory, and local government as well as the private sector and the academe.

Peters said this year's conservation forum and tour will showcase conservation district and partner work from across the country, the Northern Plains states and North Dakota.

Hofschneider informed Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) last June 23 that through the commitment of his office in 2022, the CNMI has established an essential partnership with the NACD board and management. Since then, Hofschneider said, the CNMI has benefitted from their expertise, valuable resources, and support to improve and enhance food security in the region.

As a legislator and member of the Senate Resources, Economic Development and Programs, and Gaming Committee, Hofschneider said it is critical that the CNMI build on these efforts to develop policies or expand programs established in the CNMI that is beneficial to people.

He asked DeLeon Guerrero to allow Jolyn B. Duenas-Tagabuel, the legislative assistant assigned to the REDPG Committee, to accompany him to this event, as they gather information from government officials and the respective efforts made to address conservation throughout the region.

DeLeon Guerrero approved Hofschneider's request.

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NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPENING DATE: July 06, 2023 CLOSING DATE: July 21, 2023 TIME: 4:00 P.M.

NMHC JVA No.	Positions:	Salary
2023-013	1- Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) Program Administrative Specialist	$25,000.00 per annum- UNGRADED

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be accessed at www.nmhcgov.net.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; or at the Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; or email application and documents to officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net . NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

Six families needed to host KSKK youth group

The Saipan Mayor's Office is requesting for six families to welcome and host children from the KSKK exchange group during the duration of their stay on Saipan.

"Exchange programs provide opportunities for the youth to immerse themselves in different cultures, languages, and customs. By providing such programs, youths gain firsthand experiences and develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of our cultures," said Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho.

The International Youth Exchange Association or KSKK group will be visiting Saipan for an exchange program from July 24 to July 31. This will be the 42nd time the KSKK group has visited Saipan and the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of the KSKK group is to promote and cultivate international understanding of youth and to advocate for friendly relations and exchanges between different countries.

The participants in the group include 12 students (six males and six females), as well as one female chaperone.

"We will be hosting a variety of educational activities to showcase the uniqueness of our cultures, learn our rich history, experience the beauty of our island, and build relationships with our youth and elders," said Camacho.

Those who are interested are encouraged to contact Hiroko Tenorio, international exchange program coordinator, at (670) 234-6208 or via email at htenorio@mos.gov.mp. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. The Saipan Mayor's office is also open through lunch. ***(PR)***

UOG's SBPA offers 12 scholarships

The University of Guam's School of Business and Public Administration announces the opening of applications for the Pedro "Doc" Sanchez Professional Scholarship for career employees of the Government of Guam who plan on enrolling in the 2023 fall semester.

There will be six scholarships for undergraduate students and six graduate scholarships for this announcement cycle.

The scholarship is in tribute to the late Dr. Sanchez, who was a legislator, historian, public administrator and an educator who promoted the value of an educated government workforce. He served as president of the University of Guam from 1970 to 1974. Sanchez graduated from St. Thomas University in Minnesota, obtained his master's degree in education from Columbia University, and received his doctorate from Stanford University.

The deadline to apply is 5pm, July 14, 2023.

- An applicant must submit:
- A completed application form
- A typewritten essay
- A letter of recommendation signed by a government, education, or community leader, preferably from someone who has direct knowledge of an applicant's work and academic capabilities as an employee within GovGuam.
- A letter of recommendation from the applicant's supervisor or director of a department or agency.
- Transcripts
- Verification of Employment

Applications can be submitted in person at the University of Guam School of Business and Public Administration Dean's Office or via email at https://uogsbpa.com/docsanchez

For more information, contact Iris Lapid at (671) 735-2501/2525 or sbpaconnect@triton.uog.edu ***(UOG)***

Jury trial for man accused of license fraud begins

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The jury trial for a man accused of license fraud is set to begin today at the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

The jury trial for Bonifacio "Boni" Sagana is set to begin today at the District Court for the NMI with a jury selection.

According to court documents, the U.S. District Court for the NMI issued an arrest warrant for Sagana following a grand jury indictment back on Jan. 31, 2022, on the charge of conspiring with others to unlawfully produce a CNMI driver's license.

Sagana fled the CNMI before he could be arrested and was only taken into custody last May 16, 2022, in Wisconsin.

Sagana was allegedly identified by other defendants facing the same charges as the person who arranged for them to fraudulently obtain a CNMI driver's license using a counterfeit U.S. immigration visa number.

According to documents from the Eastern District Court of Wisconsin, Sagana, a U.S. permanent resident, appeared at an initial hearing on May 16, 2022, before judge James R. Sickel.

The charge against Sagana is punishable by up to a maximum sentence of 15 years imprisonment and a $250,000 fine.

Man involved in license fraud scheme to plead guilty

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The man accused of conspiring with former Bureau of Motor Vehicles director Juana Deleon Guerrero to produce fraudulent CNMI driver's licenses is set to plead guilty in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

Li Yongde, better known as "Ivan," has agreed to a plea agreement in the license fraud case filed against him in the District Court for the NMI.

Assistant U.S. attorney Albert S. Flores Jr. filed a motion yesterday, asking the District Court to set the case for a change of plea hearing next Tuesday, June 11.

"In light of the plea agreement signed by the parties and filed with the court on July 3, the United States of America hereby moves this court to set this matter for a change of plea hearing on June 11," states the motion.

Over a week ago, Ivan's co-conspirator, Deleon Guerrero, changed her plea from not guilty to guilty for one count of conspiracy to unlawfully produce an identification document, specifically local driver's licenses.

District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather Kennedy has since recommended the matter for sentencing to U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona.

Pursuant to her plea agreement, Deleon Guerrero is looking at a sentence between three and five years for her involvement in fraudulently producing over 50 licenses to undocumented individuals.

According to the unsealed information against Deleon Guerrero, on or about Jan. 1, 2020, through about Dec. 20, 2022, on at least 50 occasions, Deleon Guerrero conspired with Ivan, fellow BMV employees, residents of the CNMI without lawful immigration status, and others, to produce CNMI driver licenses unlawfully for 10 individuals without valid and current legal immigration statuses.

Specifically, Deleon Guerrero permitted Ivan, a citizen of the People's Republic of China without lawful immigration status, to bring PRC citizens and other nationalities without lawful immigration status, to the BMV, where those foreign citizens were then issued fraudulent CNMI driver licenses.

Ivan allegedly charged these individuals around $1,500 to $1,700 for a new license and around $300 to $400 for a renewal license.

Ivan would accept payments from foreign citizens and bring them to the BMV where they would meet with BMV staff, including Deleon Guerrero.

There, Ivan would assist foreign citizens by serving as a translator and by submitting driver license applications on their behalf that included fraudulent immigration documents.

The United States says Deleon Guerrero was aware that Ivan was facilitating these illicit transactions and even directed five members of her staff to assist Ivan with fraudulent distribution of CNMI driver licenses to foreign citizens without lawful immigration status.

The defendant also communicated directly with Ivan to make appointments or other necessary arrangements to facilitate the fraudulent scheme.

Deleon Guerrero accepted payments from Ivan, and others, through cash of upwards of $500.

In addition, the former director and five other members of the BMV were routinely treated to meals bought and paid for by Ivan.

LIBDAY

From page 1

Citizenship Division, as announced at the Liberation Day festival grounds in the Garapan Fishing Base Tuesday night.

Both won $4,000 for their floats that were donned to the teeth with decoration trying to emulate and signify this year's theme of "Resiliency Rising."

There were seven other floats in the competition, including the CNMI House of Representatives, the CNMI Office of the Governor, the Office on Aging, the CNMI Childcare Providers Association, the Talaabwogh Star Association, Women of Destiny, and the CNMI Palauan Community Association.

"We are grateful to our corporate sponsors and government partners who helped us financially in support of this year's Liberation Day parade and festivities. As volunteers, we hope our efforts deliver events worthwhile of our community's attendance," said Nadine Deleon Guerrero, chairwoman of the Liberation Day Committee. "Thank you to the thousands of people who came out to help us celebrate our parade competitors and participants. We hope you all enjoyed it. Our committee looks forward to delivering an even bigger parade next year. Special thanks to the [Department of Public Safety, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services and Homeland Security and Emergency Management] for ensuring orderly traffic control and keeping our community safe. We are extremely grateful for your professionalism and partnership."

The Liberation Festival grounds at the Garapan Fishing Base remains open from Friday to Sunday from 5:30pm to 10pm.

On July 7, 8, and 9, there will be bingo games; on July 15 is the Battle of the Bands competition co-sponsored by the LDC and Napu Brewing; and on the last day, July 22, there will be one more night of bingo and the closing ceremony sponsored by MarPac.

LEIGH GASES

The Kagman Agricultural Farms and Producers Association won the float competition in the Non-Profit Organization Division.

LEIGH GASES

The Department of Corrections' "You are your choices, challenges, and changes" float, covered in woven leaves and included a cage with a "prisoner" inside, won the Citizenship Division of the contest.

CBMA

From page 1

monthly meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, CBMA special assistant Daniel Aquino said his office has successfully secured military medical support through DOD's IRT program, which is a military training opportunity.

Dubbed as the 2023 Operation CNMI Wellness Mission Project, the campaign will provide members of the CNMI community on all three islands—Saipan, Rota, and Tinian—with medical and veterinary services, including optometry, dental, dietician, behavioral health, and general health public education.

As for the number of military personnel taking part in the IRT, Aquino said a total of 170 will be visiting the islands—120 on Saipan from July 11 to 20, 25 on Tinian from July 11 to 19, and 25 on Rota from July 11 to 19.

Aquino said the mission will take place from July 11 to 20, 2023 and will be executed in partnership with the U.S. Army Reserves, U.S. Air National Guard Reserves, the U.S. Air Force, U.S Army 807th Medical Command (Deployment Support), various military medical brigades along with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Public School System, offices of the mayors of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, the Rota Legislative Delegation, CNMI Legislature, Saipan Boonie Babies, and Saipan Cares for Animals.

According to its website, IRT is a DOD training opportunity, exclusive to the United States and its territories, that delivers joint training opportunities to increase deployment readiness. Simultaneously, IRT provides key services (health care, construction, transportation, and cybersecurity) with lasting benefits for American communities. IRT depends on community partners to ensure mission success.

The community partner office of the CBMA will provide the locations for bed down (lodging), locations for training, and local resources such for transportation and meals (lunch), according to Aquino.

NUKE

From page 1

are worried that their reputation will be damaged even if their catch isn't contaminated.

Rafael Mariano Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, submitted its final assessment of the plan to Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Tuesday.

The report is a "comprehensive, neutral, objective, scientifically sound evaluation," Grossi said. "We are very confident about it."

The report said IAEA recognizes the discharge "has raised societal, political and environmental concerns, associated with the radiological aspects." However, it concluded that the water release as currently planned "will have a negligible radiological impact on people and the environment."

Japan's plan and the equipment for the discharge are "in conformity with the agreed international standards and its application," Grossi said.

He said the dilution of treated but still slightly radioactive wastewater for gradual release into the sea is a proven method widely used in other countries, including China, South Korea, the United States and France, to dispose of water containing certain radionuclides from nuclear plants.

Much of the Fukushima wastewater contains cesium and other radionuclides, but it will be filtered further to bring it below international standards for all but tritium, which is inseparable from water. It then will be diluted by 100 times with seawater before it is released.

But Haruhiko Terasawa, head of the Miyagi prefectural fisheries cooperatives, said they will continue to oppose the release while concerns remain.

"The treated water is not a problem that ends after a single time or a year of release, but lasts as long as 30-40 years, so nobody can predict what might happen," he told TV Asahi.

Japan has sought the IAEA's support to gain credibility for the plan. Experts from the U.N. agency and 11 nations have made several trips to Japan since early 2022 to examine preparations by the government and the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings.

Some scientists say the impact of long-term, low-dose exposure to radionuclides remains unknown and urge a delay in the release. Others say the discharge plan is safe but call for more transparency in sampling and monitoring.

CASINO

From page 1

IPI casino site primarily because there are still some gaming device materials there.

Demapan said the fourth auction is already done, but there are still some gaming materials on the site. "Most of it is gone, but there are [still] some," he said.

The fourth auction in a series of six that's mandated by the federal court was concluded last March 31 and netted over $225,000.

The court mandated the auctions pursuant to the receivership granted in favor of IPI's former contractor, USA Fanter Corp., which had sued IPI for unpaid materials and services. The auction is supposed to raise the funds needed to repay USA Fanter.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Mirza and Hafsa

Mirza

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mirza and Hafsa, who are both former feral cats and were rescued and are now indoor cats only, are in need of cat-free homes and are available for adoption after July 17, 2023.

Their owner, who is relocating off island, is looking for serious inquiries only and only from individuals who have no cats and will keep them as indoor cats for their safety and well-being.

Hafsa

Mirza (Arabic meaning Prince, pronounced Meerzah) was rescued from Micro Beach. He is a neutered male, approximately 7-9 months old.

He is white with cream swirls and stripes. Typically, blue-eyed cats are hearing-impaired and this might be the case with Mirza as he is often startled when you pet him and doesn't always respond unless you are close to him. This is why he cannot be an outdoor cat.

Mirza does not get along with other cats. He has only just begun to tolerate Hafsa after closely monitored interactions with her since January. This is why he has to be the only cat in the house.

Hafsa (Arabic meaning Little Lioness, pronounced Hoffsah) is a spayed 4-6 month-old who was adopted from Saipan Cares for Animals, where she was being treated for a very bad upper respiratory infection, was suffering from depression as all of her other siblings had been adopted and was almost near death.

She is black, gray, and tan coloring, with a near-diamond on her back and other gorgeous swirls and striping. She cannot be outdoors because she has had no one to show her how to defend herself or hunt, rendering her easy prey or subjecting her to getting killed. She also needs to be the only cat in the house as she can get quite aggressive toward Mirza at times.

Both cats have been around two large dogs and did very well with them. Both are incredibly loving toward humans, including children, and are very smart. However, Hafsa may take some time to warm up to any new humans.

Both should be shown patience, kindness, gentleness, and lots of love.

Contact owner Diana Silveira at (670) 789-4122 or Facebook message her. For more information, check out her Facebook post of the cats at https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0dUMpicgN8Z4GzQ5o-2c5LsQfxtWH9VLKrwsihApkLEq1PFZU-wFYz2o9vRaKUv2Bchl&id=597634323&-mibextid=ZbWKwL

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UOG students study smart agriculture tech in Taiwan

Ten University of Guam students are in Taiwan this month to explore the latest in agricultural practices and technologies.

The students were selected and awarded travel scholarships for the Smart Agriculture Technology & Culture Experience Study Abroad Program through a grant received last year by the UOG College of Natural & Applied Sciences from the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food & Agriculture. The grant program aims to advance agriculture and food science education in insular institutions with the use of virtual reality technology.

The students began the program with Chinese language lessons taught by Dr. Liang-Kuang Chen, a visiting scholar from National Taiwan Normal University, to enhance their experience in Taiwan.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

The University of Guam student participants of the Smart Agriculture Technology & Culture Experience Study Abroad Program sit for a photo with Dr. Lee Yudin, dean of UOG's College of Natural & Applied Sciences; Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez, acting president of UOG; Dr. Kuan-Ju Chen, assistant professor of agricultural economics; Dr. Jeng-Hung Liu, assistant professor of animal sciences; and Dr. Liang-Kuang Chen, visiting scholar from National Taiwan Normal University.

"Our teacher has been very helpful and understanding—especially at the [accelerated] pace we're going," said Cecilia Pangelinan, a junior in UOG's Agriculture & Life Sciences Program.

The students arrived in Taiwan last July 3, where they will spend two weeks getting hands-on experience both using virtual reality technology and in the field, operating farm implements.

"Through this program, the students will gain a deep understanding of the challenges and solutions faced by farmers from around the world," said Dr. Kuan-Ju Chen, assistant professor of agricultural economics at UOG. "They will have the opportunity to experience different philosophies concerning land use, get hands-on experience with time-honored agricultural methods, and witness the cutting-edge future of farming."

Their study abroad experience includes visits to the Smart Agriculture Center, the Known-You Seed Co., the Fengshan Tropical Horticulture Experimental Branch, Cacao Farm Formosa, the National Science & Technology Museum, and traditional markets.

"I'm looking forward to seeing the difference in agriculture between Taiwan and Guam," said Aubrie Uson, a senior agriculture major and public administration minor. "I want to see how they implement technology into their agriculture."

The study broad program highlights the Smart Agricultural Technology program at National Pingtung University of Sciences & Technology and the Taiwan Huayu Bilingual Exchanges of Selected Talent Program at the National Taiwan Normal University, two new sister colleges of UOG's College of Natural & Applied Sciences. The program is also supported by Honhui Group (Taiwan), which has donated laptops for the students to use. ***(PR)***

SBDCN, SCC work to strengthen local entrepreneurship

To help expand community partnerships and the CNMI's entrepreneurial capacity, the CNMI Small Business Development Center Network at Northern Marianas College and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce have signed a memorandum of understanding for the year 2023.

The MOU showcases a reciprocal agreement to collaborate in helping to develop and grow the local economy in the CNMI and to co-sponsor business development seminars and training events.

SCC joins the following partners who are currently have MOUs with CNMI SBDCN:

■ Community Development Institute
■ Commonwealth Economic Development Authority
■ Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center
■ International Economic Development Council
■ Rota Mayor's Office
■ Tinian Chamber of Commerce

The CNMI SBDCN promotes a business-friendly economic infrastructure in the community, builds entrepreneurial capacity and financial literacy within that community, and provides current and new small businesses with the technical assistance, counseling, training, and support they need to innovate, adapt, and grow.

The CNMI Small Business Development Center Network is composed of the CNMI SBDC lead center on Saipan, the Rota SBDC, and Tinian SBDC. CNMI SBDCN is partially funded by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and NMC. ***(PR)***

7 injured in turbulence on Hawaiian Airlines flight to Australia

HONOLULU (AP)—A Hawaiian Airlines flight from Honolulu to Sydney hit severe turbulence, injuring seven people on board.

The plane was carrying 163 passengers and 12 crew members on Thursday when it "encountered unexpected severe turbulence approximately five hours into the flight," said a statement from the airline.

"The plane just dropped," passenger Sultan Baskonyali told ABC News. "We weren't prepared."

She described one man going upward, hitting his head on the ceiling and dropping back down.

Airport medics assessed and released three injured passengers when the flight landed in Sydney, the airline said. One passenger and three flight attendants were referred to hospitals for evaluation. The flights attendants have since been released, the airline said Monday, but added that it was waiting to hear from the passenger.

"I haven't heard from the airline at all even though both my children who were on the flight sustained minor injuries," another passenger, Tara Goodall, told The Associated Press Monday.

They were returning home to Sydney after visiting Hawaii—the first overseas trip for her two sons. It was difficult, she said in text messages, "seeing your kids being thrown around the plane cabin" and being unable to make them feel safe.

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ITB23-GOV-42300072

SUBMISSION DATE: 9:00 AM ChST, MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2023

PHASE II – KALABERA CAVE REPAIRS & IMPROVEMENTS

Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lieutenant Governor David M. Apatang, through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), is soliciting sealed bids for the ***Phase II Kalabera Cave Repairs & Improvements***, Marpi, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This project is funded by the 702 Capital Improvement Project funding under the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs.

The project package will be available in digital format only on **Friday, July 7, 2023** at the Capital Improvement Program Office, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building in Capitol Hill, Saipan, during regular working hours.

A **Pre-Bid Conference** will be held at the project site in Marpi, Saipan, CNMI at **10:00 AM ChST, July 21, 2023.**

Questions regarding this ITB may be submitted via email to Ms. Nerissa B. Karakaya at nerissa.benavente@gov.mp no later than **4:30 PM ChST, Thursday, July 28, 2023**. All Questions & Answers will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Bidders located outside of the CNMI must fill out and submit the Notice of Intent to Bid Form to the Director of Procurement Services no later than 10:00 AM ChST, Monday August 7, 2023.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS, AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ Arnold I. Palacios
Governor, CNMI

/S/ Brien S. Nicholas Jr., Acting Director
CNMI Procurement Services

JOB OPENING

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER
EUCON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Job Duties:
Provides instruction at the Secondary School level in the following classes: Fundamental Math, Algebra I and Geometry; creates lesson plans; evaluates student performance and provides feedback; communicates students' progress to parents; develops and updates curriculum for the classroom; maintains accurate records of students' progress; keeps order in the classroom; posts grades and sends grade reports to parents; performs other teaching-related duties.

Other requirements:
Baccalaureate degree in liberal arts, stem-science, or engineering; ability to communicate and interact with students and parents; ability to encourage and motivate students; basic computer and Microsoft software skills.

Work Location: Eucon International School, Kulales Place, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Gualo Rai

Mail Address: P.O. Box 500087, Saipan, MP 98950

E-Mail address: hr@eucon.edu

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Advisory: SV traffic light not functional

The Department of Public Works would like to inform the public that the San Vicente traffic light is not functioning due to a blown-out transformer. The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. was working to repair the transformer yesterday afternoon. The community and motorists are advised to use caution while driving in this area. ***(PR)***

4.7-magnitude quake in the Marianas region

At 11:22am on July 3, 2023, a report of a 4.7-magnitude earthquake occurred in the Mariana Islands region. Currently, there are no reports of injuries or damages and no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

MCS Q4 HONORS LIST

Mount Carmel School congratulates these students for making it to the 4th Quarter of SY 2022-2023 President's List and Honor Roll. Note that the names are arranged alphabetically by first name.

PRESIDENT'S LIST

Students must have a GPA of 4.00 or above and must attain character marks of VG or above.

1st Grade

- Alexandra Victoria Stuart
- Avalyn Mae N. Lizama
- Bentley Ellaine C. Santos
- Chloe Jodia B. Mostales
- Francine Jaymee O. Pineda
- Isaiah Francisco P. Villagomez
- Joevoni Dre T. Cruz
- Liv Mariana R. Taijeron
- Logan Jesus D. Tenorio
- Rhianna Kay G. Kautz
- Zhane Graeson V. Jugos

2nd Grade

- Ariah Kadyn M. Deleon Guerrero
- Arielle Jane G. Aniciete
- Aubrey Nicole A. Matsunaga
- Benz Elliott C. Santos
- Brayden Kane P. Taguchi
- Carlie Wang Bai
- Gabriella Salome D. Gamab
- Haleina Mae M. Maratita
- Ines F. Maratita
- Jayven Xander B. Sablan
- Jeremy Sho B. Sasamoto
- Jesse Joseph Gregory J. Palacios
- Jiyoo Lee
- Leilani Soledad N. Castro
- Mya Joy C. Manibusan
- Rockson R. Cabrera
- Sumai Soledad N. Castro
- Vincent C. Salavaria

3rd Grade

- Aiesha Sadie H. Camacho
- Ava Monae C. Basa
- Carina Inez Guerrero
- Chloe Nicole Arnold
- Crystin C. Pangelinan
- Denise Kamille W. Iglesias
- Ezekiel Ma'nu'i P. Villagomez
- Felix N. Tomokane
- Gabriella Jo C. Tenorio
- Isaiah Preston Paul
- Jace S. Pangelinan
- Jake Hiram M. Maratita Jr.
- Jamara Jayde C. Cabrera-Sablan
- Khoen Alexander C. Torres
- Maverick Lo Yamanaka
- Rei Ezekiel P. De Belen
- Scott Jonathan Y. Muna
- Youngwoo (Stella) Choi

4th Grade

- Aiyana Carmen B. Pangelinan
- Aliyani M. Basa
- Chloe Jane C. Militante
- Clarise Faith C. Garamonte
- Erika Loreen T. Cuyugan
- Friella Huanne C. Dela Santa
- Jake Peter C. Deleon Guerrero Jr.
- John Damien B. Sablan
- Kendra Elise P. Camacho
- Kirk Ivan E. De Perio
- Logan Kane M. Propst
- Madden Anthony M. Deleon Guerrero
- Mateo Moctezuma A. Almada
- Oliveeah Julee F. Kaipat
- Scarlett Shae R. Salas
- Sera Y. Guerrero
- Shierlynde Rita T. Zapanta

5th Grade

- Adelle Jane G. Kautz
- Amber Faith C. Militante
- Chloe Anne Marie A. Matsunaga
- Ezaela Patrice M. Camacho
- Jeongwoo (Ryan) Choi
- Jeremy Q. Terlaje
- Jiwoo Lee
- Karl Angelo M. Diaz
- Kathleen B. Cano
- Kennani Vinae C. Villagomez
- Lydia Xian
- Miana Dolores B. Delacruz
- Rileyanne Havanna C. Cruz

6th Grade

- Kainoa B. Tenorio
- Maria Y. Guerrero

7th Grade

1. Alexia Aulene M. Rubia
2. Cecilia R. Villagomez
3. Do Geon Kim
4. Isabella Soledad G. Demapan
5. Jadine Nicole P. Pangelinan
6. Janessa Francine T. Arriola
7. Jener Franz O. Pineda
8. Jessie Chen
9. Julius Y. Sheu
10. Katherine Hwang
11. Kayla Rose Larson
12. Layla Carmen Ann J. Palacios
13. Victor Neil M. Santos

8th Grade

- Christine Rosanne N. Castro
- Christopher James N. Dela Cruz
- Enzo Umeki DLG. Sasamoto
- Hope Gianna McQuay
- Iris Maleia S. Rasa
- Jeein Lee
- Jose Clarence S. Tenorio
- Josephine L. Lopez
- Juliana Magan T. Subang
- Justin O. Mallari
- Kaitlyn Alexza A. Drilon
- Nicole Angela S. Pangilinan
- Rafael Elijah P. De Belen
- Sage R. Villagomez
- Serenity Ann C. Fujihira
- Seungwhoo (Henry) Choi
- Stephanie Joyce C. Sevilla
- Taher Shakir

9th Grade

- Arwen Hannah N. Bartolata
- Ayanna Faith H. Matsumoto
- Camron Zavier S. Pangelinan
- Chae Eun Kim
- Emmanuel C. Pontiveros
- Gavril Myles Santiago
- Heleyna Frielle C. Dela Santa
- Jasmine Meleana V. Deleon Guerrero
- Jessiana B. Tenorio
- Jieun Kwon
- Kern Han
- Leonard Jake B. Regalado
- Mya DLG. Pangelinan
- Nyla N. Deleon Guerrero
- Oscar Bien R. Buenaflor
- Patricia Denielle G. Lugtu
- Quince Emanuele O. Tizon
- Seunghee (Sunny) Jeon
- Victor Nash M. Santos
- William Matthew B. Cano
- Zion Jude C. Cabrera

10th Grade

- Alvin Hong
- Chloe Alexis O. Camacho
- Irie Kane H. Camacho
- Jada B. Chang
- Jeewoo Son
- Laizza Vianca A. Mallari
- Seungeun Ha
- Tricia Antonnette J. Palacios
- Vayden I. Matagolai

11th Grade

- Avah Marie C. Torres
- Brandon Lee
- Breanna Sue L. Mafnas
- Eunkyu (Joey) Hong
- Gwen Tiffany D. Gamab
- Jerry Chen
- Kriselle Bryana Mitzy A. Drilon
- Krissy Rease F. Cepeda
- Leyonee Alfred F. Tolentino
- Maria Yoshie C. Torres
- Minki Jung
- Paule Angelo Santos
- Paul William DLG. Camacho
- Ruben Antonio C. Guerrero
- Sanghyeok Lee
- Tyana Kisha T. Tesiro
- Xinwen Jin

12th Grade

- Aubriana Maria A. Sablan
- Brent Matthew E. Ortizo
- Brissa C. Hunter
- Carlo Crisdeo H. Diaz
- Clint Allen M. Irang
- Derek Moritaro S. Sasamoto
- Donnie James Jr. C. Militante
- Erin Lillian Frink
- Francine Monique F. Albuen
- Gerald John I. Deleon Guerrero Jr.
- Jazmyn Phoeme D. Lopez
- Jill Anne Marie O. Mallari
- Jose John I. Mafnas
- Kayannie Ilifighar B. Peter
- Kinamarie Irene M. Dela Cruz
- Kristan Rose C. Torres
- Kyla Monique B. Cabrera
- Lady Vanessa Hideko P. Dancoe
- Leopoldo DLG. Naraja
- Leunyce B. Regalado
- Manuel Jacinto M. Pangelinan
- Mathew Adrian A. Sablan
- Moeisha Eleanor F. Cruz
- Ohane S. Borja
- Raeka Shereen A. Lantin
- Serafin R. Deleon Guerrero II
- Sienna Jade B. Muna
- Sierra Rose F. Reyes
- Sophia Michelle G. Cornelio
- Vidal Jose H. Camacho
- William Xue
- Yurihana Rosa DLG. Sasamoto

HONOR ROLL

Students must have a GPA of 3.66 or above and must not have any behavior grade of U or NI.

1st Grade

- Aiden James C. Dela Cruz
- Christopher Pedro M. Arriola
- Dylan Jon O. Pangelinan
- Ethan Robert F. Dasalla
- Jerome Jose C. Cruz
- Joseph K. Cruz Jr.
- Journie Kesiil F. Castro
- Kenji Ryder P. Griffin
- Kyle Ethen A. Cortez
- Landon Jay C. Pangelinan
- Liam Tasi S. Ehsa
- Makenna Lei C. Pangelinan
- Matthew Allen Mercado
- Miyah P. Kaipat
- Xander James C. Lieto
- Yanbin (Jacob) Cui

2nd Grade

- Eduardo Vicente D. Diaz II
- Farrell Huan C. Dela Santa
- Kiean Peter Tomokane
- Miriam Grace Flores
- Stephen Jacub F. Camacho
- Yanchen (Henry) Cui

3rd Grade

- Aleaya T. Bermudes
- Apollo Inapo M. Arriola
- Aycee Rianne T. Quitugua
- Edward George A. Flores II
- Gino Marvin T. Deleon Guerrero
- Jack Joseph C. Sablan Jr.
- Lucas Chenrui Wu
- Maven Kohlette Borja
- Yuna Yu

4th Grade

- Alana Lei C. Macaranas
- Anah Bellah M. Guerrero
- Chloe-Mae T. Taimanao
- Ian James B. De Leon
- Jonathan Li Zhang
- Neia Dolana Noreyemal D. Tagabuel
- Qoheleth Thomas DLG. Blas

5th Grade

- Ava Carmina B. Sablan
- Avah Mae Delacruz
- Brianna Rose L. Palacios
- Cali Jade C. Cabrera
- Chloe K. Cepeda
- Daniel Kang
- Francisco Joseph C. Cruz
- Franko Ray C. Tudela
- Heaven Agnes M. Deleon Guerrero
- Khylee Ysabelle D. Santos
- Kieun Lee
- Krish M. Devjani
- Mikayla V. Guerrero
- Paige Kanae Y. Muna
- Reef Cole F. Reyes
- Talina Rose Aguon-Mcclure
- Victoria Eve G. Terlaje
- Von Derick A. Lauron

6th Grade

- Brielle V. Malonzo
- Caydince Raine M. Massage
- Chase B. Guerrero
- Enrico Albert D. Pagsuyuin
- Franklin Huang
- Jaden Shyne C. Fujihira
- Jaze Enzo P. San Nicolas
- Mia Remae Guerrero
- Sofia Gail A. Dimafelix
- Trisha Juliana D. Abuan

7th Grade

- Arthur Angel O. Deliva
- Aubrey Rae T. Quitugua
- Cassidee Jolina C. Flores
- Ciana Lei B. Demapan
- Cyril Michael S. Pangilinan
- Dylan Jacob O. Camacho
- Gabriella Aundrea B. Inos
- Heather Elizabeth Pain A. Sin
- Jayson Jared A. Tagabuel
- John Matthew L. Ellama
- Juhwan Hyun
- Kimason R. Cabrera
- Mary Shelley C. Deleon Guerrero
- Remiegem B. Melchor
- Siwoo Lee

8th Grade

- Akoni Jesus C. Matsumoto
- Carly Kate P. Dela Cruz
- Chanseo (Stephen) Yeom
- Chanwoong (Henry) Yeom
- Ethan Jayce H. Tomokane
- Frank Anthony M. Reyes
- Gabriela Bark
- Hiromi Rosa P. Sasamoto
- Jeffrey G. Concepcion
- Jupri O. Torres
- Kaden Christian M. Propst
- Maya Elaine McQuay
- Mei Xu
- Naomi Skye H. Matsumoto
- Patricia Ann Matsumoto
- Patrick V. Guerrero
- Sarah Angela B. Melchor
- Wayne Dominic E. Ano
- Yeonwoo (Kevin) Cho
- Yukiko Kiyomi S. Sasamoto

9th Grade

- Annieskha F. Arreza
- Brandon Joseph T. Tesiro
- Edsel Benedict A. Pagtalunan
- Eloy Thomas I. Deleon Guerrero
- Geoff Ian Castro
- Israel B. De Leon Jr.
- June Yu
- Lamee Lam
- Lance Jericho A. Javier
- Michael Q. Mercado Jr.
- Mikaehla Paige R. Mendoza
- Riana Joy P. Travilla
- Therese Joy O. Ogo

10th Grade

- Ari James Toskas
- Aryana Carmen A. Taimanao
- Audrein Jennifer A. Mallari
- Breana Ysabel A. Patawaran
- Chealzka M. Navarro
- Chelsy Anne P. Reyes
- Claire Regina G. Kautz
- Jaeyun Jung
- Jay Francis Dominic O. Pineda
- Junghyun Cho
- Maili B. Peter
- Malina Rose B. Tenorio
- Neveah Sky B. Taisacan
- Quimari Liwerscheng B. Duenas
- Rafael Mykel Gozon
- Yunseong Seol

11th Grade

- Bernice Shane Q. Sabino
- Devin Jordan M. Propst
- Earle Gabreil L. San Nicolas
- Elisa Ellen E. Blanco
- Ethan Jude C. Militante
- Jan Marini P. Millo
- Jazmin Jay A. Tagabuel
- Jhazmyn Nhicole C. Valiente
- Juliana T. Vergara
- Kristin Jewel P. Dela Cruz
- Leo Bang
- Natalie Gabrielle E. Ano
- Palikkun S. George
- Raymana Owen D. Salas
- Sarawut (Tan) Sukanpong
- Xiang Jun (Jerry) Zeng

12th Grade

- Dahyun Shim
- Dohyun (Mark) Lim

DORMANT DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS

The Dormant Deposit Accounts listed below are currently held at the Bank of Saipan and have been inactive. If you believe you have a claim to any of these accounts, please make your claim at the Chalan Lau Lau Head Office, Tinian or Rota Branch of Bank of Saipan before October 1, 2023.

Pursuant to Public Law 18-69, any unclaimed deposits remaining from this list after October 1, 2023 will be paid to the "CNMI Treasurer" and delivered to the Department of Commerce, Banking Division. Therefore, any claims made after October 1, 2023 must be made at the CNMI Department of Commerce, Banking Division.

BANK OF SAIPAN
MARIANAS PRIDE

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Rota, MP 96951

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John B Mendiola
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Rota, MP 96951

Antonio T Manglona
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PMB 447 Box 10001
Saipan, MP 96950

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PMB 1043 Box 10000
Saipan, MP 96950

Wei Chih Wang
PMB 84 Box 10003
Saipan, MP 96950

Yanwei Dai
PMB 626 Box 10003
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 133

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

The Supreme Court's solution for racial bias is to pretend it doesn't exist

The U.S. Supreme Court's rulings on Thursday that race-conscious college admissions programs are unlawful was widely expected but still deeply discouraging.

The nation's highest court, at its best a great protector of minority rights and equal access to education, now sides with those who want to narrow educational opportunities for minorities. It is a grim and bewildering turn away from of the court's previous opinions and the nation's long march toward equality.

The rulings come in two lawsuits brought by a conservative group, Students for Fair Admissions, against Harvard and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The complaint against Harvard focused on supposed discrimination against Asians who were not admitted despite academic records and test scores that exceeded others who were admitted. But it's the 6-3 ruling against UNC that carries the most disturbing message of backtracking on the nation's commitment to compensate for the sins of slavery and Jim Crow and the prejudice and economic disparities that still profoundly affect many Black people.

The Supreme Court's conservative majority thinks that the way to ameliorate racial bias is to stop acknowledging it. In an earlier opinion on school integration, Chief Justice John Roberts blithely wrote: "The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." But the view that "colorblindness" obliterates the legacy and daily realities of racial prejudice is a head-in-the-sand perspective.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor said in her dissenting opinion in the Harvard case, "Today, this Court stands in the way and rolls back decades of precedent and momentous progress." She added that the ruling "cements a superficial rule of colorblindness as a constitutional principle in an endemically segregated society where race has always mattered and continues to matter."

The campus at UNC-Chapel Hill, home of the nation's oldest public university, was constructed in part by slaves and was long closed to Black students. The university has made great strides in the last half-century to balance that history with policies focused on creating a diverse student population. But even with that effort, Black students make up only 8 percent of the student population while Black people represent 22 percent of North Carolina's population.

UNC-Chapel Hill will still be able to use other factors to create a mix of students that looks more like the state it serves. It can consider, for instance, an applicant's family income level or geographic location. Some universities have taken to favoring students in the top 10 percent of their high schools, which helps students in predominantly minority high schools.

Writing for the majority, Chief Justice John Roberts noted that while institutions can't base admission decisions on race, applicants are still free to discuss how race shaped their lives in their applicant essays and interviews.

Nine states, including California, Florida and Michigan, already

See SUPREME on Page 9

APPOINTED BY MAN WHO LOST THE POPULAR VOTE, BUT WAS AWARDED THE PRESIDENCY ANYWAY BECAUSE OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE (A.K.A. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR REPUBLICANS).
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Supreme Court's conservative revolution comes into sharper focus

By NOAH FELDMAN
Bloomberg Opinion

Noah Feldman is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist. A professor of law at Harvard University, he is author, most recently, of* The Broken Constitution: Lincoln, Slavery and the Refounding of America.

The Supreme Court's conservative judicial revolution is taking on a recognizable, three-pronged structure.

On big-ticket, hot button issues, like abortion and affirmative action, the court blows precedent out of the water and replaces it with a ruling that the conservative legal movement has been demanding for half a century.

On major Democratic initiatives, like climate policy and President Joe Biden's student loan forgiveness program, the court blocks executive action using Chief Justice John Roberts's brainchild, the major questions doctrine.

In the third category, the revolution takes a breather as each of President Donald Trump's three appointees gets the chance to emphasize a specific legal issue he or she cares about. Roberts and the court's three liberals provide the rest of the votes. The result is a reasonable ruling that avoids major doctrinal upheaval—and doesn't undermine the rest of the revolution.

> The Supreme Court's conservative judicial revolution is taking on a recognizable, three-pronged structure.

Examples of this third category include the court's rejection of the scary-dangerous independent legislature theory (driven by Justice Brett Kavanaugh's interest in protecting elections); the restoration of Biden's immigration powers (driven by Justice Amy Coney Barrett's Scalian interest in protecting standing); and upholding the Indian Child Welfare Act (driven at least partly by Justice Neil Gorsuch's sincere concern for the sovereignty of Native American tribes).

Some observers might think these category-three cases show Roberts's moderating influence. They don't. In these cases, Roberts is no more powerful than the liberals. In these cases, one of the Trump appointees always provides the decisive fifth vote.

Of course, this conservative judicial revolution wouldn't be happening if Trump had lost the 2016 election. No Trump, no reversal of Roe v. Wade; no ending of affirmative action; no reversals on LGBTQ rights, gun safety or the separation of church and state.

But the real roots of this jurisprudential revolution long pre-date Trump's presidency. The judicial radicalism we see on the court now is the product of the roughly 50-year-old conservative legal movement. And that movement was founded specifically in reaction to liberal Supreme Court victories.

The movement, which began in the 1970s, has mostly focused on overturning landmark decisions made by the Burger court in the 1970s—primarily Roe (abortion), Bakke (affirmative action) and Lemon v. Kurtzman (religion).

Inspired by the example of Justices William Rehnquist and Antonin Scalia, movement conservatives made judicial appointments into an important aspect of their political program. The success of the effort culminated in the appointments of Gorsuch, Kavanaugh and Barrett, products of that movement.

For them, it would be bizarre to be the on the court, have the majority, and not execute the revolutionary program that has informed their entire legal education: overturning the constitutional right to abortion, letting Christian prayers back into public schools, and ending affirmative action.

As for the court's approach to Democratic executive branch initiatives, it can be at least partly attributed to the sea change in judicial thinking caused by Trump's presidency. Remember that, when Trump was president, liberals called enthusiastically for the courts to step in and overturn Trump's legally outrageous initiatives. By calling for judges to reverse Trump's decisions on the exclusion of undocumented people from the census, the Muslim immigration ban, threats to sanctuary cities, the unfunded border wall and more, liberals helped set public expectations for the court to check the president.

Roberts, long an advocate of judicial restraint, especially with respect to the executive branch, underwent a personal journey of transformation in the face of Trump's lawlessness. At first, in the Muslim immigration ban case, he tried to get Trump to be reasonable. When Trump took Roberts's accomodationism as weakness, Roberts reversed course and became a key figure in

See FOCUS on Page 9

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Hearts north of 50

If, in fact, one could actually die of a broken heart (figuratively speaking), I don't think I would have made it past the summer of 1990—teenage sweetheart problems at the end of my junior and beginning of my senior years in high school. Of course, my heart was much stronger then, younger and without the brittle scars from decades hence. I imagine the survival rate for wounded hearts north of 50 years old are exponentially less when in the throes of a cardiac event—a fancy way of saying "matters of a broken heart." I have heard it said that a heart attack feels like an elephant sitting on your chest so heavy such that all you want to do is die. I wouldn't know what an elephant on your chest feels like. I haven't had a heart attack… yet…but I do know what it feels like to want to die sometimes. Sadly, my heart has been under attack more often than I'd like to admit—the price some of us pay for giving it away too easily. I'd say that feels more like a bottomless vortex in the pit of your stomach sucking the air and everything about you inward like you might implode into yourself. In a downward spiral, it's all you can do to keep your head up enough to catch air (thinner with every new labored breath).

And no! This is not a cry for help; just an observation and a precautionary tale from an old man with his share of downs, picking up pieces of what once was a vibrant heart runneth over with childlike innocence and love. Neither goodness nor mercy followed in all the days of my life. Perhaps karma plays a role or maybe some of us are just unlucky with whom we choose to have hold our hearts. Sometimes even the gentlest-looking hands turn out to be cold, hard stone cloaked in a thin layer of silk.

For many of us who spent any of our formative years living in Chuuk (at least in the '70s and '80s), the idea of going all in for love was instilled early with a draconian sense of all or nothing. That, coupled with a skewed sense of what it means to be a man and the importance of respect, proved to be a dangerous combination. You would be hard-pressed to find anyone, at least among my peers from Chuuk, who weren't directly affected by someone killing themselves "for love" (or rather for no love, I suppose). At a relatively young age, I saw my share of guys having the noose cut from their throats as final proof of "how much they loved her." I was nearby also when they found the unrecognizable remains of a young lady who didn't want to leave any doubt about her love for a boy who didn't reciprocate her feelings.

Saying we glorified suicide for love could be an understatement; in fact, we sing about it. The lyrics of a favorite song among us reads as follows:

"Neneto nemin kopwe kuna ukukun me aparen tongom ei iei epwene solani manawei on efoch senin Okinawa… kone ameiseikok ne un coffee o pwan emeninmen ne fetan lukun peiasei."

[Translation: "Look over here girl, so you can see the level and measure of my love for you which is about to steal my life with a rope from Okinawa… enjoy yourself drinking your coffee, smiling and walking around my grave."]

We have other songs with similar messages—no doubt grim and misguided, but it is, in fact, the reality of how many of us were influenced and are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice as proof of so-called love. One so-called "love expert" from the internet points out, "Love may be the first thing that a person considers when entering a relationship, but it is also the Np. 1 reason why one commits suicide." She goes on to say, "The No. 1 reason for suicide is love. The No. 2 reason for suicide is no love" (M. Dionisio). I call bologna, but will leave this here as food for thought.

I don't know what, if any, empirical studies exist about the correlation between suicide and mental illness, but it may be fair to say that at any time a person considers ending his or her life (for anything), that in and of itself is a form of mental illness, at least a mental breakdown of some sort. For many, the struggle with mental illness—sometimes manifesting as anxiety, depressive or other psychotic disorders often accompanied by suicidal ideation—is and always will be internal. External triggers and such only exasperate symptoms which, if dealt with appropriately, can be laid to rest (no pun intended).

From a work standpoint, mental health issues can be extremely challenging and some of the most difficult to accommodate, both for yourself and for others who may be decompensating. It becomes increasingly difficult when in a position of authority you have to balance personal struggles with the needs of others around you or with legal mandates defining your responsibilities to the people you serve and your community at large.

Presently, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation under the Office of the Governor offers eligible people with disabilities services to assist with their employment goals and with independent living. Of this year's 181 clients for OVR, 21% are eligible due to a primary disability of, "Other Mental Impairments" and "Psychosocial Impairments"—disability causes include anxiety disorders, depressive and other mood disorders, mental illness (not listed elsewhere) and schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.

We are often asked to offer trainings on so-called "disability etiquette" and other "best practices" for working with people who have disabilities and there certainly is a plethora of formalized trainings to that end; however, every person is unique and subsequently the needs are very individualized. Beyond that, each person is entitled to their own choices and we subsequently are required to support consumer choice—we don't get to dictate what a person may or may not do.

Of course, personal choice comes with either reward or consequence. Each of us can reap in the rewards of good choices or suffer the consequences of bad ones and, if there is any justice in this world, you and you alone would suffer any consequences of your own choices. Unfortunately, many of us know all too well the lingering consequences for those of us who remain after a person we know takes his own life.

By JIM RAYPHAND
Special to the Saipan Tribune

James M. Rayphand is the director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and is a former executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.

That's a long, heavy way to arrive at this single point: "Even the strongest hands can lose their grip, the greatest of minds can become cloudy, and the biggest hearts can break. So, be kind, just always be kind" (Unknown). Most of all, please be extra gentle when handling fragile and tattered hearts north of 50.

For more on vocational rehabilitation services, please contact us at (670) 322-6537/8 or via the internet at www.ovrgov.net.

An LGBT Poet Laureate in Great Britain

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

Trudy Howson is the inaugural LGBT+ Poet Laureate in Great Britain since 2016. Her poem, IDAHOT, presented here is an acronym written for International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. She read it at St. Paul's Cathedral in England and it was featured on national radio.

IDAHOT 2022

I'm your brother and sister,
I'm both Mrs. and Mister,
I'm Gay, Bi, and Transexual,
I am … myself.

I'm your father and mother,
Husband, auntie, friend, and lover
I am different… and the same,
I am your family.

I'm black, white, pink, … every hue.
Christian, Muslim, Buddhist …Jew
Skinhead, Goth, Punk, New Romantic,
I am me. I am you.

I'm your district nurse, your teacher,
The boy and girl next door,
Someone in the street,
I am your neighbor.

I'm no better than you, or no worse,
No richer, poorer, blessed, or cursed,
Just part of the same Gravitational Wave,
As you are.

FOCUS

From Page 8

overturning Trump's initiatives.

But Roberts's achievement in standing up to Trump had consequences. It led him to develop the ideas behind the major questions doctrine. The point of the doctrine, which roughly says that the court will block the executive from doing something really big and really novel unless Congress has clearly authorized it, is to constrain aggressive, outside-the-box executive action. I don't believe Roberts would have created the doctrine without his experience fighting Trump's unprecedented behavior.

Now, of course, the doctrine lets the conservative majority reverse bold Democratic executive action. But Roberts's activist-contra-the-president mode was honed during the chaos of the Trump years.

Finally, the varying interests of the three Trump appointees, which can fuel reasonable outcomes in the midst of the revolutionary maelstrom, can be attributed to the intellectual culture of the Federalist Society. That group's goal was to create conservative legal intellectuals and get them on the courts. To be a conservative legal intellectual you need, or rather used to need, a set of jurisprudential principles. Gorsuch, Barrett and Kavanaugh each had a set of these—and each still does. They care about these principles and will deploy them to create what they consider logically coherent jurisprudence. At the same time, few or none of these principles will interfere with prongs one and two of the revolution.

To test my theory, you can ask in any future case: where does it fall in the three-fold framework? The answer should give you the outcome.

SUPREME

From Page 8

bar race-conscious admissions at their public universities. The result has been a drop-off in Black and Hispanic students and greater expense as the universities try alternative ways of attracting minority students.

Ironically, the cases against race-conscious admissions programs cite the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. The constitutional change was adopted in the aftermath of the Civil War to require equal treatment under the law of formerly enslaved people. Now conservatives are arguing that giving Black minorities a preference in admissions amounts to illegal reverse discrimination.

Ketanji Brown Jackson, the Supreme Court's first Black female justice, wrote in her dissent in the UNC case: "To impose this result in that clause's name when it requires no such thing, and to thereby obstruct our collective progress toward the full realization of the clause's promise, is truly a tragedy for us all."

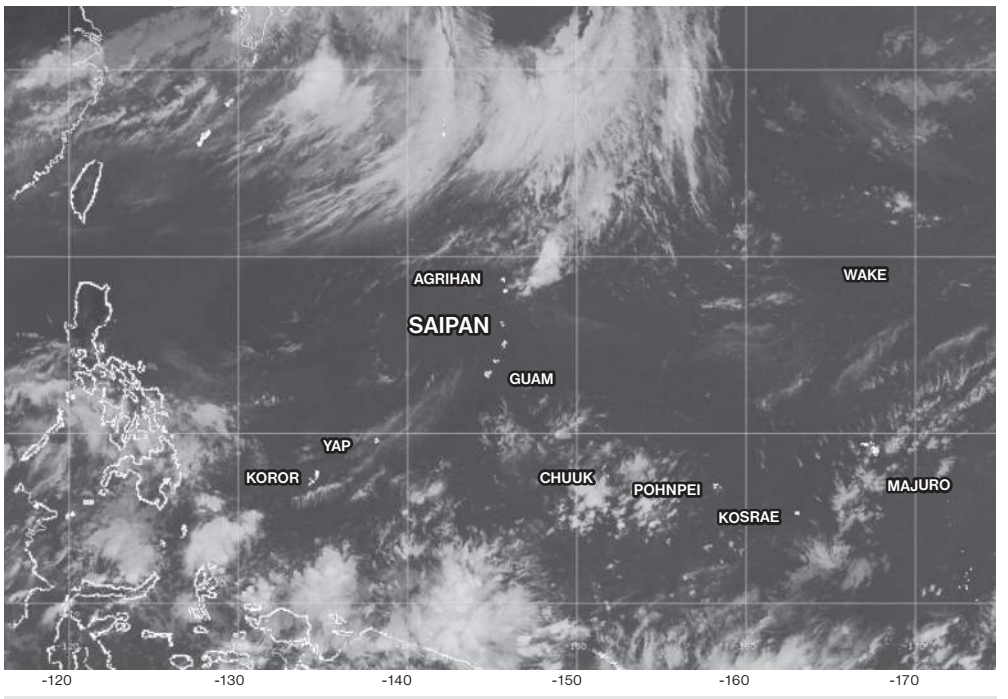
Race-conscious admissions are over at UNC-Chapel Hill and across the nation, but the efforts by universities to find ways to ensure that minorities have access to top universities must continue.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Isolated showers. Partly sunny	A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny	A 40 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy	A chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy
86° 79°	86° 79°	86° 79°	87° 79°	86° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:20 AM, WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters. The Ipan buoy reveals seas around 3 feet, composed mainly of trade-wind swell from just north of east.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Scattered Thunderstorms	88° / 81°
Palau	Isolated Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	87° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	88° / 81°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	86° / 82°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Monday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:27 AM	9:40 PM
Friday	-	9:30 AM	10:26 PM
Saturday	-	10:29 AM	11:08 PM
Sunday	-	11:25 AM	11:47 PM
Monday	-	12:19 PM	11:47 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	61° / 49°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	104° / 74°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	89° / 83°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	87° / 75°
London	Partly Cloudy	72° / 54°
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 58°
Manila	Isolated Thunderstorms	95° / 80°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	58° / 49°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	88° / 80°
New York	Mostly Sunny	89° / 74°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	88° / 75°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	81° / 62°
Busan	Cloudy	78° / 71°
Rome	Sunny	90° / 69°
Salem	Thunderstorms	85° / 71°
San Francisco	Cloudy	64° / 55°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	89° / 73°
Tokyo	Showers	89° / 75°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	89° / 74°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
3:56 AM	Low Tide	1.52
8:33 AM	High Tide	2.20
4:08 PM	Low Tide	-0.37
11:22 PM	High Tide	2.18

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1, 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3467	3:00AM	7:10AM	Daily up to July 20
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
TW9308	4:45AM	8:45AM	1, 5 July 17 to Aug 18
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1, 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174 via Guam	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3468	8:20PM	1:50AM+1	Daily up to July 19
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	10:00PM	3:45AM+1	6, 4 July 23 to Aug 20
7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

McDonald's breaks ground on new Mangilao location

» Donates $25,000 to American Red Cross-Guam Chapter

MANGILAO, Guam—McDonald's of Guam and Saipan is thrilled to announce the groundbreaking of its new location in the vibrant village of Mangilao in Guam.

The official groundbreaking ceremony took place last June 29 at the upcoming site, situated next to Mangilao Mobil.

The contractor of the 4,550-square foot location is Nakoa Guam, Inc. and it will be able to accommodate as much as 67 customers.

To enhance customer convenience, the new location will feature a double lane drive thru, equipped with digital menu boards both inside and outside the restaurant. Additionally, McDonald's Guam and Saipan will provide indoor self-order kiosks for a seamless ordering experience.

"We are delighted to bring the McDonald's restaurant to the Mangilao community," said Joe E. Ayuyu Jr., vice president and owner/operator at McDonald's of Guam and Saipan. "I know that over the years there have been countless requests by residents in this part of Guam to open a McDonald's restaurant here. This new location signifies our answer to the needs of the community and our dedication to showing our customers convenience, innovative technology, and a comfortable dining atmosphere."

In addition to the groundbreaking celebration, McDonald's of Guam and Saipan donated $25,000 to the Guam chapter of the American Red Cross during the groundbreaking ceremony. This contribution reflects our commitment to supporting the communities we serve and assisting those in need during challenging times.

"We are honored to make this contribution to the Red Cross in light of the vital mission of assisting the people impacted by the devastation of Typhoon Mawar who are in dire need of everyday necessities," said Joe E. Ayuyu Jr.

The groundbreaking ceremony marks an exciting milestone for McDonald's of Guam and Saipan as the local fast food franchise expands its presence and continues to serve its valued customers across the island.

Locally owned by Jose and Marcia Ayuyu and their son Joe E. Ayuyu Jr., McDonald's of Guam and Saipan is the leading food service restaurant chain in the Mariana Islands. McDonald's of Guam and Saipan have served the local communities for over 50 years in Guam and 30 years on Saipan and remains one of the island's largest employers. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Noel Lomtong, Nakoa Guam Project manager; Therese M. Terlaje, Guam Legislature Speaker; Marcia E. Ayuyu, vice president and owner/operator of McDonalds of Guam and Saipan; Joe C. Ayuyu Sr., president and owner/operator of McDonald's of Guam and Saipan; Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero; Joe E. Ayuyu Jr., vice president and owner/operator of McDonald's of Guam and Saipan; Lt. Gov. Joshua F. Tenorio, and Mangilao Mayor Allan R.G. Ungacta.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Guam first gentleman Jeffrey A. Cook, Joe E. Ayuyu Jr., Marcia E. Ayuyu, Joe C. Ayuyu Sr., Sen. Joe S. San Agustin, and Mangilao Mayor Allan R.G. Ungacta.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

McDonald's of Guam and Saipan presents its $25,000 donation to the American Red Cross-Guam Chapter.

GRMC celebrates 8th anniversary throughout July

DEDEDO, Guam—For the month of July, Guam Regional Medical City commemorates its eighth anniversary in a series of events planned for its employee partners and the community.

On Friday, July 7 the celebration kicks off with an anniversary mass and blessing at the GRMC Chapel beginning at noon, followed by blessings to each department. At 1pm, there will be a Chocolate Ceremony (in celebration of World Chocolate Day) at the main lobby. At 2pm, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held for the hospital's new computerized tomography scan machine at the radiology department.

On Tuesday, July 11, and Thursday, July 13, GRMC will host scavenger hunts for day and night shift employees, which will include prizes.

From Monday, July 17, through Friday, July 21, employees will get to participate in a spirit week.

In the latter part of July, there will be a family event for all GRMC employees, family members, and guests.

To conclude the month's festivities, GRMC will host its annual Community Health Fair at the Micronesia Mall Center Court on Saturday, July 29, from 10am to 3pm. More information on the health fair will be provided.

"GRMC is honored to have served our island and Micronesia for the last eight years," said GRMC president and CEO Alan Funtanilla. "GRMC continuously strives to provide the highest quality specialty and acute care, and this wouldn't be possible without the tireless dedication of our staff. We humbly thank the people of Guam and Micronesia for continuing to entrust us with your care." ***(PR)***

Judge limits Biden admin in working with social media companies

By JIM SALTER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A judge on Tuesday prohibited several federal agencies and officials of the Biden administration from working with social media companies about "protected speech," a decision called "a blow to censorship" by one of the Republican officials whose lawsuit prompted the ruling.

U.S. District Judge Terry Doughty of Louisiana granted the injunction in response to a 2022 lawsuit brought by attorneys general in Louisiana and Missouri. Their lawsuit alleged that the federal government overstepped in its efforts to convince social media companies to address postings that could result in vaccine hesitancy during the COVID-19 pandemic or affect elections.

Doughty cited "substantial evidence" of a far-reaching censorship campaign. He wrote that the "evidence produced thus far depicts an almost dystopian scenario. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a period perhaps best characterized by widespread doubt and uncertainty, the United States Government seems to have assumed a role similar to an Orwellian 'Ministry of Truth.'"

Republican U.S. Sen. Eric Schmitt, who was the Missouri attorney general when the lawsuit was filed, said on Twitter that the ruling was "a huge win for the First Amendment and a blow to censorship."

Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry said the injunction prevents the administration "from censoring the core political speech of ordinary Americans" on social media.

"The evidence in our case is shocking and offensive with senior federal officials deciding that they could dictate what Americans can and cannot say on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other platforms about COVID-19, elections, criticism of the government, and more," Landry said in a statement.

The Justice Department is reviewing the injunction "and will evaluate its options in this case," said a White House official who was not authorized to discuss the case publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

"This administration has promoted responsible actions to protect public health, safety, and security when confronted by challenges like a deadly pandemic and foreign attacks on our elections," the official said. "Our consistent view remains that social media platforms have a critical responsibility to take account of the effects their platforms are having on the American people, but make independent choices about the information they present."

The ruling listed several government agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services and the FBI, that are prohibited by the injunction from discussions with social media companies aimed at "encouraging, pressuring, or inducing in any manner the removal, deletion, suppression, or reduction of content containing protected free speech."

The order mentions by name several officials, including Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and others.

Doughty allowed several exceptions, such as informing social media companies of postings involving criminal activity and conspiracies; as well as notifying social media firms of national security threats and other threats posted on platforms.

The plaintiffs in the lawsuit also included individuals, including conservative website owner Jim Hoft. The lawsuit accused the administration of using the possibility of favorable or unfavorable regulatory action to coerce social media platforms to squelch what it considered misinformation on masks and vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also touched on other topics, including claims about election integrity and news stories about material on a laptop owned by Hunter Biden, the president's son.

Administration lawyers said the government left it up to social media companies to decide what constituted misinformation and how to combat it. In one brief, they likened the lawsuit to an attempt to put a legal gag order on the federal government and "suppress the speech of federal government officials under the guise of protecting the speech rights of others."

Nation

Revelers across US brave heat, rain to celebrate Fourth of July

BOSTON (AP)—Revelers across the U.S. braved heat and heavy rain to take part in Fourth of July activities Tuesday—celebrating the nation's founding with parades, fireworks and hot dog eating contests at a time of lingering political divisions and concerns about the country's future.

In Boston, people dodged raindrops to nab a coveted space on the grassy oval in front of the Hatch Shell along the Charles River ahead of the traditional Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular. Hundreds of thousands of partygoers typically line both sides of the river for the fireworks spectacular that follows a concert.

At another longstanding celebration, fans of competitive eating crowded to watch Nathan's Famous Fourth of July hot dog eating contest held in the Coney Island section of New York City.

Heavy downpours interrupted the contest, but after the pause, Joey "Jaws" Chestnut swallowed 62 franks and buns in 10 minutes.

"What a roller coaster, emotionally," Chestnut said. The 39-year-old from Westfield, Indiana, first competed for the title in 2005 and hasn't lost since 2015.

The unsettled weather moved on before the start of Macy's annual Fourth of July fireworks show, which launched some 60,000 pyrotechnics into the sky, bursting in bouquets of colorful light over New York City's East River.

New York wasn't the only state where weather factored into events.

The 10-kilometer Atlanta Journal-Constitution Peachtree Road Race that typically draws thousands of runners in humid summer weather was cut short because of possible thunderstorms.

Farther north, a fireworks show in Yankton, South Dakota, was postponed until Wednesday night because lightning prevented crews from setting up the display. In Nebraska, the Omaha Symphony's Independence Day Celebration that includes a concert and fireworks shows were also postponed until Wednesday night.

New Orleans residents welcomed rain and slightly cooler conditions after days of heat and humidity baked the city. The General Roy S. Kelley fireboat was returning to New Orleans Riverfront for a patriotic water show, sending streams of red, white, and blue water into the air.

The Colorado towns and suburbs of Estes Park, Golden and Highlands Ranch cancelled fireworks celebrations after thunderstorm alerts were issued. Severe weather warnings scuttled Independence Day travel plans at Denver International Airport, where at least 290 flights were delayed and 171 cancelled — among the most flights affected in the nation — according to Flight Aware.

President Joe Biden hosted a barbecue for military families at the White House, which was decked out with red, white and blue bunting and big U.S. flags draped over the columns facing the South Lawn. Biden told the crowd gathered how grateful he was for their service. And he talked about how important it was to work to unify the nation.

"Democracy is never guaranteed," Biden said. "Every generation must fight to maintain it."

Later, the Bidens watched fireworks from the White House balcony with thousands of guests on the lawn, as Louis Armstrong's version of "America the Beautiful" played over loudspeakers.

Vice President Kamala Harris was in her home state of California, where she visited a Los Angeles fire station to pay tribute to first-responders who she said risk their lives for their community.

AP

Flags and patriotic stars flutter and twirl as Dwane Tervooren rides with other motorcyclists during Tuesday's Independence Dayparade in Buffalo Gap, Texas Tuesday, July 4, 2023.

5 dead in Philly shooting that's nation's worst violence around July 4

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A 40-year-old killed one man in a house before fatally shooting four others on the streets of a Philadelphia neighborhood, then surrendering to police officers after being cornered in an alley with an assault rifle, a pistol, extra magazines, a police scanner and a bulletproof vest, police said.

A 2-year-old boy and a 13-year-old were also wounded in the Monday night violence that made the working-class area of Kingsessing the site of the nation's worst violence around the July Fourth holiday.

Police called to the scene found gunshot victims and started to help them before hearing more shots. Some officers rushed victims to hospitals while others ran toward the gunfire and chased the firing suspect. Officers ultimately arrested the assailant in an alley, Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw said at a news conference. The shooter had no connection to the victims before the shooting, she said.

"On what was supposed to be a beautiful summer evening, this armed and armored individual wreaked havoc, firing with a rifle at their victims seemingly at random," she said Tuesday afternoon.

Staff Inspector Ernest Ransom, the homicide unit commander, said witness interviews and video indicated that the suspect went to several locations in a ski mask and body armor, carrying an AR-15-style rifle.

"The suspect then began shooting aimlessly at occupied vehicles and individuals on the street as they walked," he said. The vehicles included a mother driving her 2-year-old twins home, and one was wounded in the legs and the other hit in the eyes by shattered glass.

Philadelphia police on Tuesday afternoon identified the victims as 20-year-old Lashyd Merritt, 29—year-old Dymir Stanton, 59-year-old Ralph Moralis and 15-year-old Daujan Brown, all pronounced dead shortly after the Monday night gunfire; and 31-year-old Joseph Wamah Jr., who was found in a home early Tuesday, also with multiple bullet wounds.

Investigators believe Wamah was the first victim killed, but he wasn't found by family members until hours later, Ransom said.

A 2-year-old boy shot four times in the legs and a 13-year-old shot twice in the legs were in stable condition, as were a 2-year-old boy and a 33-year-old woman injured by shattered glass.

Police said the suspect is believed to have acted alone and there was no reason to believe anyone else was involved. Police and prosecutors said no charges were planned at this point against a second person taken into custody who is believed to have obtained a gun somewhere and fired back at the shooter.

"When you are under fire in a mass shooting, there are rights to protect others and rights to protect yourself," District Attorney Larry Krasner said.

Authorities asked for patience as they investigate every aspect of the shooting. That investigation, Outlaw said, "includes the 'why.'"

Krasner said the suspect would face multiple counts of murder, as well as aggravated assault and weapons charges, and was expected to be denied bail.

ACROSS THE NATION

Texas shooter in racist Walmart attack going to prison

EL PASO, Texas (AP)—A white Texas gunman who killed 23 people at a Walmart in 2019 returns to court Wednesday for sentencing in a mass shooting that targeted Hispanic shoppers in the border city of El Paso. Patrick Crusius, 24, is set to receive multiple life sentences after pleading guilty to federal hate crime and weapons charges in one of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history. Although the federal government did not seek the death penalty, Texas prosecutors have not taken lethal injection off the table under a separate case in state court. Investigators say the shooting was preceded by Crusius posting a racist screed online. The sentencing phase could last several days. It is the first time that relatives of the victims, who included citizens of Mexico, will have an opportunity to address Crusius face-to-face in court.

1 killed, 3 hurt in crash of small plane shortly after takeoff

MURRIETA, Calif. (AP)—One person was killed and three others were injured when a single-engine plane crashed Tuesday in Southern California, authorities said. The Cessna 172 with four people aboard crashed shortly after taking off from French Valley Airport in Murrieta around 2:45 p.m., the Federal Aviation Administration said. Televised news footage showed the small plane upside down in a business parking lot. One person died at the scene about 85 miles (135 kilometers) southeast of downtown Los Angeles, according to the Riverside County Fire Department. Three others were taken to hospitals, one with serious injuries, the fire department said on Twitter. The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board will investigate.

4 people, including baby, died crossing Rio Grande

EAGLE PASS, Texas (AP)—An infant was among four people who died while crossing the Rio Grande in the Texas border city of Eagle Pass in a 48-hour period over the Fourth of July weekend, authorities said. The Texas Department of Public Safety's Tactical Marine Unit on Saturday recovered four people from the river, including a woman and baby girl who were unresponsive, Texas Department of Public Safety Lt. Chris Olivarez said on Twitter on Monday. Officials immediately began chest compressions on the woman and baby, and both were taken to the hospital, Olivarez said. Both were pronounced dead at the hospital, he said. The two survivors were turned over to U.S. Border Patrol, Olivarez said. On Sunday, the body of a man was recovered from the river, and on Monday, the body of a woman was found, Olivarez said. The identities of the dead weren't known because none had identifying documents on them, he said. The bodies were found in the same region where nine migrants died while attempting to cross the river in September.

Asia

Taliban outlawing women's beauty salons in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The Taliban are banning women's beauty salons in Afghanistan, a government spokesman said Tuesday.

It's the latest curb on the rights and freedoms of Afghan women and girls, following edicts barring them from education, public spaces and most forms of employment.

A spokesman for the Taliban-run Virtue and Vice Ministry, Mohammad Sidik Akif Mahajar, didn't give details of the ban. He only confirmed the contents of a letter circulating on social media.

The ministry-issued letter, dated June 24, says it conveys a verbal order from the supreme leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada. The ban targets the capital, Kabul, and all provinces, and gives salons throughout the country a month's notice to wind down their businesses. After that period, they must close and submit a report about their closure. The letter doesn't give reasons for the ban.

Its release comes days after Akhundzada claimed that his government has taken the necessary steps for the betterment of women's lives in Afghanistan.

AP

Beauticians put makeup on customers at Ms. Sadat's Beauty Salon in Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, April 25, 2021.

It drew criticism from human and women's rights defenders on social media.

The United Nations on Tuesday also said it was engaged with the authorities in Afghanistan to get the ban on beauty salons reversed. The U.N. mission in Afghanistan, or UNAMA, took to Twitter, urging the Taliban to halt the edict.

"This new restriction on women's rights will impact negatively on the economy&contradicts stated support for women entrepreneurship," it said.

Earlier, one beauty salon owner said she was her family's only breadwinner after her husband died in a 2017 car bombing. She didn't want to be named or mention her salon for fear of reprisals.

Between eight to 12 women visit her Kabul salon every day, she said.

"Day by day they (the Taliban) are imposing limitations on women," she told The Associated Press. "Why are they only targeting women? Aren't we human? Don't we have the right to work or live?"

Despite initial promises of a more moderate rule than during their previous stint in power in the 1990s, the Taliban have imposed harsh measures since seizing Afghanistan in August 2021 as U.S. and NATO forces were pulling out.

'N. Korea satellite not advanced enough to conduct reconnaissance from space'

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The satellite North Korea failed to put into orbit wasn't advanced enough to conduct military reconnaissance from space as it claimed, South Korea's military said Wednesday after retrieving and studying the wreckage.

North Korea had tried to launch its first spy satellite in late May, but the long-range rocket carrying it plunged into the waters off the Korean Peninsula's west coast soon after liftoff. The satellite was to be part of a space-based reconnaissance system North Korea says it needs to counter escalating security threats from South Korea and the United States.

South Korea mobilized navy ships, aircraft and divers to recover debris from the rocket and satellite in a 36-day operation that ended Wednesday, the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

"Numerous" and "key" parts of the rocket and the satellite were recovered and the South Korean and U.S. experts who jointly examined them concluded the satellite wasn't capable of conducting military reconnaissance works at all, the statement said.

North Korea didn't immediately respond to the South Korean announcement.

The day the launch failed, North Korea's state media said the rocket lost thrust following the separation of its first and second stages, then crashed into the sea. At a ruling party meeting last month, North Korea called the failed launch "the most serious" shortcoming this year and harshly criticized those responsible.

Top North Korean officials have repeatedly vowed to attempt a second launch after learning what went wrong with the failed launch.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has said acquiring a military spy satellite is crucial to beef up his country's defense capability. He's said North Korea also needs to introduce other high-tech weapons systems such as multi-warhead nuclear missiles, solid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear-powered submarines.

Months before its failed satellite launch, North Korea launched a test satellite and publicized photos showing South Korean cities as viewed from space. Some civilian experts said at the time the photos were too crude for a surveillance purpose and that they were likely capable of only recognizing big targets like warships at sea or military installations on the ground.

North Korea had responded to that skepticism by saying there was no reason to use a sophisticated camera for one test.

The U.S., South Korea and others denounced North Korea's rocket launch as a security risk and a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban the country's use of ballistic missile technology. But further sanctions are unlikely since permanent council members Russia and China oppose new action.

World

Russia says it foiled Ukrainian drone attack against Moscow

Russian air defenses on Tuesday foiled a Ukrainian drone attack on Moscow that prompted authorities to briefly close one of the city's international airports, officials said, as a Western analysis said that Russia has managed to slow Kyiv's recently launched counteroffensive.

The drone attack, which follows previous similar raids on the Russian capital, was the first known assault on the city since an abortive mutiny launched 11 days ago by mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin. His Wagner troops marched on Moscow in the biggest — though short-lived — challenge to Russian President Vladimir Putin in more than two decades of his rule.

Authorities in Ukraine, which generally avoids commenting on attacks on Russian soil, didn't say whether it launched the drone raid.

The Russian Defense Ministry said that four of the five drones were downed by air defenses on the outskirts of Moscow and the fifth was jammed by electronic warfare means and forced down.

There were no casualties or damage, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said.

As with previous drone attacks on Moscow, it was impossible to verify the Russian military's announcement that it downed all of them.

The drone attack prompted authorities to temporarily restrict flights at Moscow's Vnukovo airport and divert flights to two other Moscow main airports. Vnukovo is about 15 kilometers (nine miles) southwest of Moscow.

In May, two daring drone attacks jolted the Russian capital, in what appeared to be Kyiv's deepest strikes into Russia.

Tuesday's raid came as Ukrainian forces have continued probing Russian defenses in the south and the east of their country in the initial stages of a counteroffensive.

Oleksiy Danilov, the secretary of Ukraine's Security and Defense Council, said that the military was currently focusing on destroying Russian equipment and personnel, and that the past few days of fighting have been particularly "fruitful." He provided no evidence and it wasn't possible to independently verify it.

The Ukrainians are up against minefields, anti-tank ditches and other obstacles, as well as layered defensive lines reportedly up to 20 kilometers (12 miles) deep in some places as they attempt to dislodge Russian occupiers.

The U.K. Defense Ministry said Tuesday the Kremlin's forces have "refined (their) tactics aimed at slowing Ukrainian armored counteroffensive operations in southern Ukraine."

Moscow has placed emphasis on using anti-tank mines to slow the onslaught, the assessment said, leaving the attackers at the mercy of Russian drones, helicopters and artillery.

"Although Russia has achieved some success with this approach in the early stages of Ukraine's counteroffensive, its forces continue to suffer from key weaknesses, especially overstretched units and a shortage of artillery munitions," the assessment said.

Western analysts say the counteroffensive, even if it prospers, won't end the war, which started with Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Israel withdraws troops from West Bank militant stronghold

JENIN, West Bank (AP)—The Israeli military withdrew its troops from a militant stronghold in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, ending an intense two-day operation that killed at least 13 Palestinians, drove thousands of people from their homes and left a wide swath of damage in its wake. One Israeli soldier was also killed.

The army claimed to have inflicted heavy damage on militant groups in the Jenin refugee camp in an operation that included a series of airstrikes and hundreds of ground troops.

But it remained unclear whether there would be any long-lasting effect after nearly a year and a half of heavy fighting in the West Bank.

Ahead of the withdrawal, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to carry out similar operations if needed.

"At these moments we are completing the mission, and I can say that our extensive operation in Jenin is not a one-off," he said during a visit to a military post on the outskirts of Jenin. "We will eradicate terrorism wherever we see it and we will strike at it."

The Jenin raid was one of the most intense Israeli military operations in the West Bank since an armed Palestinian uprising against Israel's open-ended occupation ended two decades ago.

Since early 2022, Israel has been carrying out near daily raids in the West Bank in response to a series of deadly Palestinian attacks. It says the raids are meant to crack down on Palestinians militants and said they are necessary because the Palestinian Authority is too weak.

The Palestinians say such violence is the inevitable result of 56 years of occupation and the absence of any political process with Israel. They also point to increased West Bank settlement construction and violence by extremist settlers.

Israel struck the camp, known as a long-time bastion of Palestinian militants, early Monday in an operation it said was aimed at destroying and confiscating weapons.

Big military bulldozers tore through alleyways, leaving heavy damage to roads and buildings, and thousands of residents fled the camp to seek safety with relatives or in shelters. People said electricity and water were knocked out. The army said the bulldozers were necessary because roads were booby-trapped with explosives.

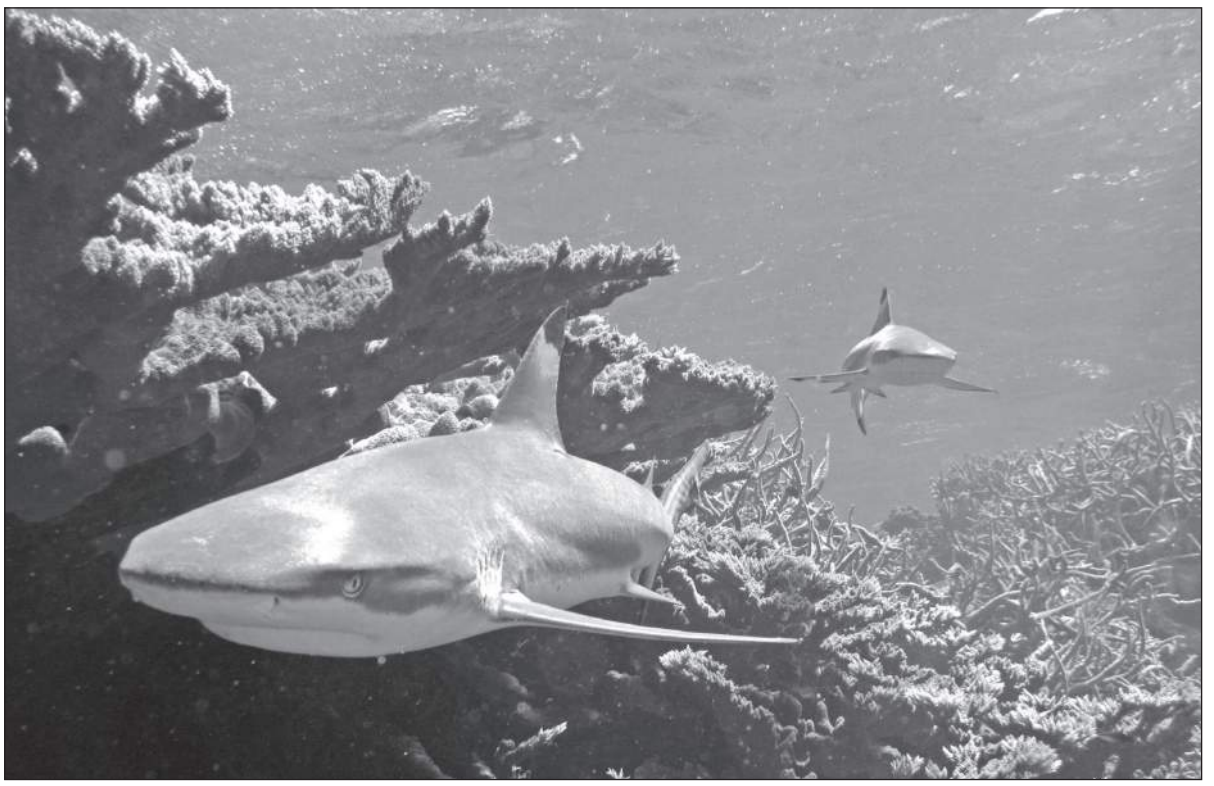
After troops left Wednesday morning, residents began emerging from their homes. They found streets lined by scorched and flattened cars and piles of rubble.

The military said it had confiscated thousands of weapons, bomb-making materials and caches of money. Weapons were found in militant hideouts and civilian areas alike, in one case beneath a mosque, the military said.

The withdrawal came hours after a Hamas militant rammed his car into a crowded Tel Aviv bus stop and began stabbing people, wounding eight, including a pregnant woman who reportedly lost her baby. The attacker was killed by an armed bystander. Hamas said the attack was revenge for the Israeli offensive.

Environment

By VICTORIA MILKO
Associated Press



KYDD POLLOCK

Blacktip sharks at the Palmyra Atoll.

Deep sea mining permits may be coming soon. What are they and what might happen?

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—The International Seabed Authority—the United Nations body that regulates the world's ocean floor—is preparing to resume negotiations that could open the international seabed for mining, including for materials critical for the green energy transition.

Years long negotiations are reaching a critical point where the authority will soon need to begin accepting mining permit applications, adding to worries over the potential impacts on sparsely researched marine ecosystems and habitats of the deep sea.

Here's a look at what deep sea mining is, why some companies and countries are applying for permits to carry it out and why environmental activists are raising concerns.

What is deep sea mining?

Deep sea mining involves removing mineral deposits and metals from the ocean's seabed. There are three types of such mining: taking deposit-rich polymetallic nodules off the ocean floor, mining massive seafloor sulphide deposits and stripping cobalt crusts from rock.

These nodules, deposits and crusts contain materials, such as nickel, rare earths, cobalt and more, that are needed for batteries and other materials used in tapping renewable energy and also for everyday technology like cellphones and computers.

Engineering and technology used for deep sea mining are still evolving. Some companies are looking to vacuum materials from seafloor using massive pumps. Others are developing artificial intelligence-based technology that would teach deep sea robots how to pluck nodules from the floor. Some are looking to use advanced machines that could mine materials off side of huge underwater mountains and volcanoes.

Companies and governments view these as strategically important resources that will be needed as onshore reserves are depleted and demand continues to rise.

How is deep sea mining regulated now?

countries manage their own maritime territory and exclusive economic zones, while the high seas and the international ocean floor are governed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas. It is considered to apply to states regardless of whether or not they have signed or ratified it. Under the treaty, the seabed and its mineral resources are considered the "common heritage of mankind" that must be managed in a way that protects the interests of humanity through the sharing of economic benefits, support for marine scientific research, and protecting marine environments.

Mining companies interested in deep sea exploitation are partnering with countries to help them get exploration licenses.

More than 30 exploration licenses have been issued so far, with activity mostly focused in an area called the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, which spans 1.7 million square miles (4.5 million square kilometers) between Hawaii and Mexico.

Why is there pressure on the ISA to establish regulations now?

A clause of the U.N. treaty requires the ISA to complete regulations governing deep sea exploitation by July 2023.

Countries and private companies can start applying for provisional licenses if the U.N. body fails to approve a set of rules and regulations by July 9. Experts say its unlike it will since the process will likely take several years.

What are the environmental concerns?

Only a small part of the deep seabed has been explored and conservationists worry that ecosystems will be damaged by mining, especially without any environmental protocols.

Damage from mining can include noise, vibration and light pollution, as well as possible leaks and spills of fuels and other chemicals used in the mining process.

Sediment plumes from the some mining processes are a major concern. Once valuable materials are taken extracted, slurry sediment plumes are sometimes pumped back into the sea. That can harm filter feeding species like corals and sponges, and could smother or otherwise interfere with some creatures.

The full extent of implications for deep sea ecosystems is unclear, but scientists have warned that biodiversity loss is inevitable and potentially irreversible.

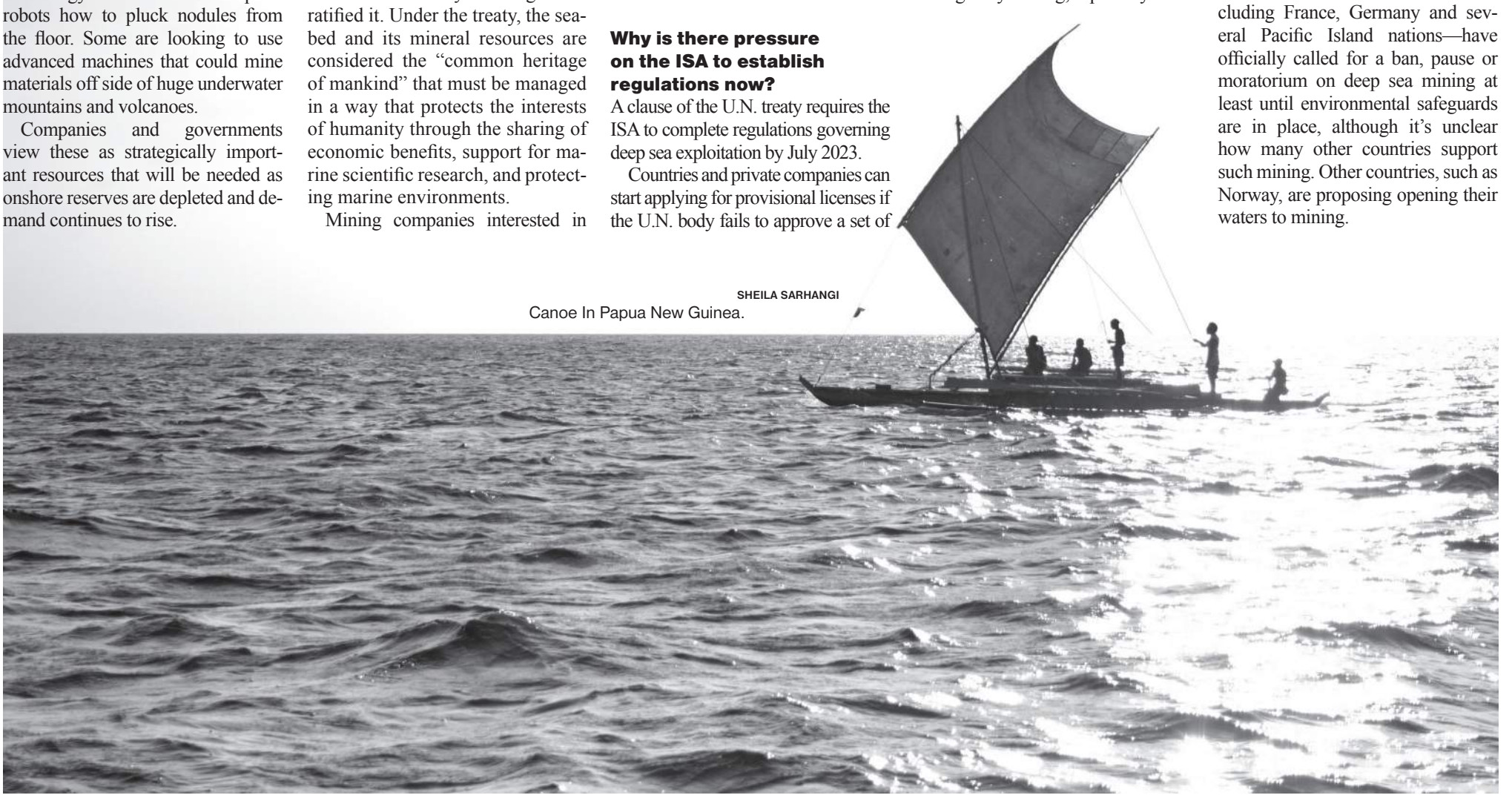
"We're constantly finding new stuff and it's a little bit premature to start mining the deep sea when we don't really understand the biology, the environments, the ecosystems or anything else," said Christopher Kelley, a biologist with research expertise in deep sea ecology.

What's next?

The ISA's Legal and Technical Commission, which oversees the development of deep sea mining regulations, will meet in early July to discuss the yet-to-be mining code draft.

The earliest that mining under ISA regulations could begin is in late 2024 or 2025. Applications for mining must be considered and environmental impact assessments need to be carried out.

In the meantime, some companies—such as Google, Samsung, BMW and others—have backed the World Wildlife Fund's call to pledge to avoid using minerals that have been mined from the planet's oceans. More than a dozen countries—including France, Germany and several Pacific Island nations—have officially called for a ban, pause or moratorium on deep sea mining at least until environmental safeguards are in place, although it's unclear how many other countries support such mining. Other countries, such as Norway, are proposing opening their waters to mining.



SHEILA SARHANGI

Canoe In Papua New Guinea.

Life & Style

Joey Chestnut defends title at 4th of July hot dog contest

By CAROLYN THOMPSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP

Joey Chestnut celebrates after winning his 16th championship title during the 2023 Nathan's Famous Fourth of July hot dog eating contest in the Coney Island section of the Brooklyn borough of New York, Tuesday, July. 4, 2023.

Eating superstar Joey "Jaws" Chestnut shook off a rain delay and gobbled his way to another win at Nathan's Famous Fourth of July hot dog eating contest, downing 62 franks and buns in 10 minutes.

Chestnut out ate runner-up Geoffrey Esper and the rest of an international field of 15 competitive eaters by double digits to clinch his 16th title. Esper, of Oxford, Massachusetts managed to ingest 49 hot dogs and buns.

In the women's contest, defending champion Miki Sudo forced down 39 1/2 hot dogs and buns to collect her ninth Mustard Belt. But before the men could compete, stormy weather moved over New York City's Coney Island and delayed the competition for two hours.

"What a roller coaster, emotionally," Chestnut said after riding out the rain and wondering whether the famed contest would go on at all. The 39-year-old from Westfield, Indiana first competed for the Nathan's title in 2005 and hasn't lost it since 2015.

His best finish was in 2021 when he tallied 76 hot dogs, but Tuesday's weather disruption made a repeat impossible.

"Everybody got messed up," Chestnut said.

Sudo beat Mayoi Ebihara's 33 1/2 hot dogs in 10 minutes in a women's event that appeared to be much closer until the final count was announced. The unofficial real-time counter showed the two leaders tied throughout much of the competition. A final count of plates settled the score.

Sudo, 37, was disappointed in her winning total, which was nine hot dogs short of her all-time high. She said competition from the 27-year-old Ebihara had thrown her off.

"The first couple minutes, I found myself watching her, which I never want to do. I never want to be distracted by the other competitors," Sudo, of Port Richey, Florida, said after the competition. "Watching her, I fumbled my hands. I got stuck with a big burp early on but was able to correct."

The annual contest on New York City's Coney Island drew competitors from England, Canada, South Korea, Japan, Brazil and Australia, according to ESPN.

Tulsa Race Massacre victim publishes memoir

NEW YORK (AP)—Being a centenarian hasn't slowed down Viola Ford Fletcher's pursuit of justice.

In the last couple of years, Fletcher has traveled internationally, testified before Congress and supported a lawsuit for reparations—all part of a campaign for accountability over the massacre that destroyed Tulsa, Oklahoma's original "Black Wall Street" in 1921, when she was a child.

Now, at age 109, Fletcher is releasing a memoir about the life she lived in the shadow of the massacre, after a white mob laid waste to the once-thriving Black enclave known as Greenwood. The book will be published by Mocha Media Inc. on Tuesday and becomes widely available for purchase on Aug. 15.

Fletcher

In a recent interview with The Associated Press, she said fear of reprisal for speaking out had influenced years of near-silence about the massacre.

"Now that I'm an old lady, there's nothing else to talk about," Fletcher said. "We decided to do a book about it and maybe that would help."

Her memoir, "Don't Let Them Bury My Story," is a call to action for readers to pursue truth, justice and reconciliation no matter how long it takes. Written with graphic details of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre that she witnessed at age 7, Fletcher said she hoped to preserve a narrative of events that was nearly lost to a lack of acknowledgement from mainstream historians and political leaders.

"The questions I had then remain to this day," Fletcher writes in the book. "How could you just give a mob of violent, crazed, racist people a bunch of deadly weapons and allow them—no, encourage them—to go out and kill innocent Black folks and demolish a whole community?"

Smallville actor released from prison for role in sex-trafficking case tied to cult-like group

The television actor Allison Mack, who pleaded guilty for her role in a sex-trafficking case tied to the cult-like group NXIVM, has been released from a California prison, according to a government website.

Mack, best known for her role as a young Superman's close friend on "Smallville," was sentenced to three years behind bars in 2021 after pleading guilty two years earlier to charges that she manipulated women into becoming sex slaves for NXIVM leader Keith Raniere.

Online records maintained by the Federal Bureau of Prisons said Mack, 40, was released Monday from a federal prison in Dublin, California, near San Francisco. Her release was first reported by the Albany Times-Union.

Mack

Mack avoided a longer prison term by cooperating with federal authorities in their case against Raniere, who was ultimately sentenced to 120 years in prison after being convicted on sex-trafficking charges.

Mack helped prosecutors mount evidence showing how Raniere created a secret society that included brainwashed women who were branded with his initials and forced to have sex with him.

In addition to Mack, members of the group included an heiress to the Seagram's liquor fortune, Clare Bronfman; and a daughter of TV star Catherine Oxenberg of "Dynasty" fame.

Mack would later repudiate Raniere and express "remorse and guilt" before her sentencing in federal court in Brooklyn, New York. ***(AP)***

Couple takes it slow as romance develops

DEAR ABBY: I am a proud 42-year-old gay man. I was legally married to a man for four years, but we were together for 12. In 2011, I had to make the decision to remove him from life support after a sudden traumatic illness. I remained single for six years, and then I met who I thought was a wonderful man who was 16 years younger. After the first year, he became controlling and emotionally abusive. When I ended the relationship, I felt so much freedom.

I have met someone my age who reminds me of my late husband, and we have bonded and are forming a relationship. So far, it has only been dating and spending a lot of time together. I'm scared to start something so soon, but it feels right.

When is a good time to move forward? When is a proper time to become intimate? We have both had bad relationships and respect each other's boundaries at the moment. I will never remarry, as I was entitled to survivor benefits from my late husband, and we both agree there are ways to protect each other and our financial needs other than marriage. Please help.

IN-BETWEEN IN COLORADO

DEAR IN-BETWEEN: It seems to me that you and this new man in your life are doing everything right. You are getting to know each other and taking your time before becoming intimately involved. The proper time to advance to the next stage would be when both of you are comfortable with the idea. Communication is key in every aspect of your relationship, and it appears you are doing that already.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm 36 years old and married with three children. I have two siblings I have a good relationship with. The problem is we have a half-sister two years younger than I am who doesn't know we exist. When my parents were married, my father had an affair with a married woman, and they conceived my half-sister.

My parents ultimately divorced. My father's mistress went back to her husband, and they remain married to this day. My half-sister was never told who her biological father is or that she has three half-siblings.

I have struggled my entire life with sharing this information with my half-sister because I don't want to ruin her life. My father passed away 20 years ago, so she will never have a relationship with him. My siblings also haven't been able to bring themselves to share this information with her, and I remain torn because we are close in age, look alike and have gone into similar fields of work.

I'd love to have a relationship with her. I understand she may not want to have a relationship with us and may have a lot of questions about why we waited so long to tell her. Is sharing the truth worth potentially ruining her life?

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

LONGING TO SHARE

DEAR LONGING: How do you think your half-sister is going to react after finding out she has been raised with a lie? Is a potential relationship with you worth the damage it may cause between her, her mother and her stepfather? If she were in need of an organ transplant, I might feel differently. Unless the reason is something equally urgent, do not intrude.

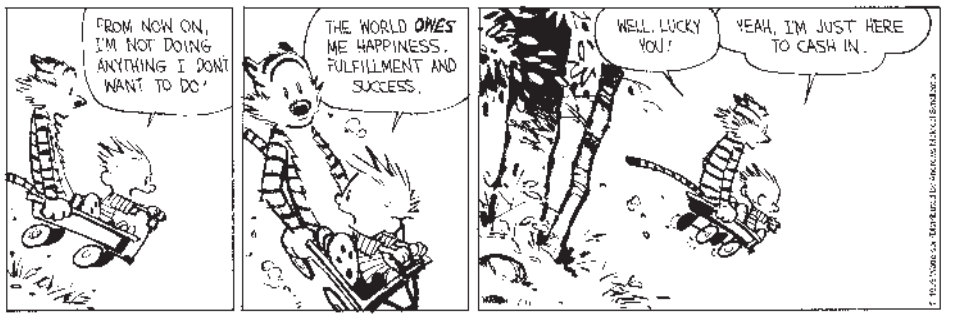
■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


FROM NOW ON, I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING I DON'T WANT TO DO!
THE WORLD OWES ME HAPPINESS, FULFILLMENT AND SUCCESS.
WELL, LUCKY YOU!
YEAH, I'M JUST HERE TO CASH IN.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

HEY, GARFIELD. I GOT YOU A NEW BALL OF YARN!
LET ME CHECK MY SCHEDULE
I'LL BE ALOOF FOR MOST OF THE DAY...
OH, WAIT. THERE'S A 10-MINUTE WINDOW AT FOUR WHEN I'LL BE PLAYFUL
JIM DAVIS 7-6

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

COACH, I'M WIPED. I CAN'T WRITE ANY MORE!
PSSH.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT WINNERS DO? THEY DON'T. QUIT.
WHEN WINNERS GET KNOCKED DOWN, THEY GET BACK UP!
NO Zs! THERE'S NO Z-ING IN THE WRITING ROOM!
Z
KATY.
COACH

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

HI, WELCOME TO BURGER HUT. YOUR NAME IS SIMILAR TO THE PIZZA PLACE.
OH, NO! YOU MEAN WE NEED TO CHANGE OUR NAME AGAIN?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN AGAIN?
I'VE STILL GOT BUSINESS CARDS FROM WHEN WE WERE BURGER BELL.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Laundry unit
5 Spiced tea
9 Mac alternatives
12 — Domini
13 Attila's group
14 Carnival city
15 Some fruit pastries
17 Vichy water
18 Discovers
19 Excited about
21 Former partner
22 "Ta-da!"
24 Retained
27 Service charge
28 Killer whale
31 "— you sleeping?"
32 USPS delivery
33 Singer McGraw
34 Seize
36 Tic-tac-toe win
37 Squarish
38 "WandaVision" star Elizabeth
40 Otherwise
41 Chin dimple
43 Ballpark figures
47 Elev.
48 Surprise in a novel
51 "May — of service?"
52 Cruising
53 Final Four gp.
54 School org.
55 Rotate
56 Close

DOWN

1 "Dragnet" org.
2 R.E.M.'s "The — Love"
3 Scrambled wd.
4 County on the English Channel
5 Bloke
6 "Ben- —"
7 Hill dweller
8 Edition
9 Would rather
10 "Arrivederci!"
11 Tart
16 Prom rental
20 Expert
22 Rockies range
23 Medal recipient
24 Actress Dennings
25 Epoch
26 Sri Lanka export
27 Drifting ice
29 109, to Caesar
30 "Little Women" woman
35 Sprite
37 Cleveland squad
39 Mar. 17 honoree
40 Halloween mo.
41 Poker token
42 Pride parade letters
43 Getz of jazz
44 Opulent
45 Jacob's twin
46 RBI, for one
49 Baton Rouge sch.
50 Not 'neath

Solution time: 24 mins.

T	A	C	T	■	B	R	A	■	U	S	E	S
E	L	L	E	■	O	D	E	■	T	A	R	A
S	A	I	L	B	O	A	T	■	O	I	L	S
S	W	I	L	L	S	■	N	A	P	L	E	S
■	■	■	S	O	T	■	A	S	I	A	■	■
P	E	P	■	B	E	N	■	H	A	W	K	S
A	G	A	S	■	R	C	A	■	N	A	I	L
I	O	H	I	L	■	O	Y	S	■	Y	A	Y
■	■	■	A	R	F	A	■	N	U	R	■	■
R	F	S	I	G	N	■	R	F	A	C	T	S
A	T	A	N	■	S	T	A	Y	S	A	I	L
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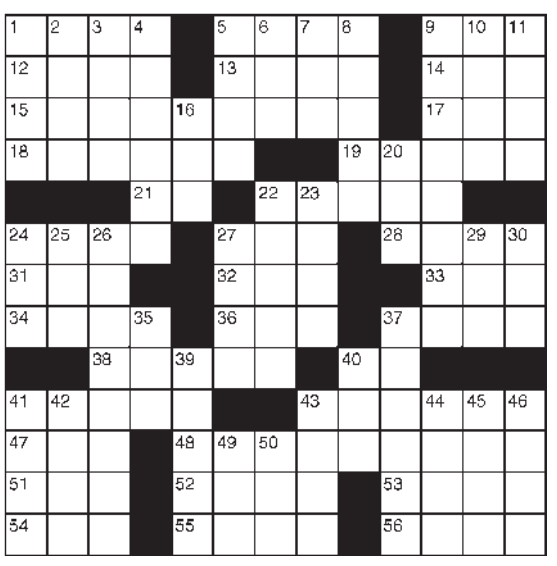
Yesterday's answer 7-6



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Hart, 44; Tia Mowry, 45; Tamera Mowry, 45; Sylvester Stallone, 77.

Happy Birthday: Discover all you need to know to reach your goal. Live with and learn from your mistakes, and find unique ways to restore what you love most. Don't give up on the ones you love, but don't let them bring you down. Communication is the best way to ensure mental, emotional and financial security. Control your emotions, speak the truth and offer sound solutions. Your numbers are 6, 14, 20, 24, 31, 39, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Rely on those who love you, not someone filling your head with nonsense. Express yourself through actions and kindness, and you'll gain respect and gratitude. Change what's necessary; impulsiveness will take you in the wrong direction. Personal growth will lead to gains. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Discuss your plans with someone close to you. Call on experts to ensure you haven't missed an important detail. Take a break from people you can't count on or who show instability. Live by the rules, and don't take unnecessary risks. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Rethink your strategy, verify information and stick to simple guidelines that lead to self-improvement and a better life routine. Don't ignore a change in yourself or someone close to you. Ask questions, see an expert and do what's best for you. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Pay attention to what others do and figure out how to protect yourself from toxic people and situations. Take the road less traveled and align yourself with those who share your concerns, beliefs and solutions. Let your actions speak for you. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Regulate your spending. Don't feel like you have to keep up with others when you only need to compete with yourself. Do whatever promotes peace of mind and opportunity. Put more energy into grooming yourself for a better future. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Don't share too much information. Work behind the scenes and pay attention to detail, and you'll devise the perfect plan to improve yourself and what you want to pursue. A reunion will connect you to someone conducive to helping you excel. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Go where the action is and participate in something energizing. It would help if you did the physical work to feel the jubilation of getting your hands dirty. Do your part, and the returns will surprise you. Actions speak louder than words. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Make headway at home by digging in and handling your to-do list. Learn from the process, and you'll discover that finishing what you start leads to peace of mind and more fun. Practice makes perfect. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take precautions, verify information and put yourself first. Pump up your qualifications through educational pursuits and grooming yourself for success. Consistency will make a difference when trying to advance. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Don't feel pressured. Call the shots, stay in control and make things happen. A change at home will play in your favor and bring you closer to the desired lifestyle. If you can envision it, you can make it happen. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Keep an open mind, but don't fill it with nonsense. Do your due diligence and use your resources to ensure a clear passage. Don't risk damaging your reputation, good relationships or physical well-being for someone else's benefit or love. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Organize your plans before you begin. Having a handle on how you want things to play out will help you make it happen. Communication is vital, and putting yourself in the spotlight will pay off. A romantic gesture will change your lifestyle. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are imaginative, flexible and demonstrative. You are intense and insistent.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9		6					
1	5	8	4					
		7				1		8
	3			6		5	9	
		6		8			2	
		5			2	6	8	
		3	8			4		
	4			3	9		5	
	8		5	4			6	2

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/6

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesturday's Answer

8	3	4	7	6	2	9	5	1
7	9	6	3	1	5	8	2	4
5	1	2	9	8	4	7	6	3
2	5	7	4	9	8	1	3	6
3	8	1	5	2	6	4	7	9
4	6	9	1	3	7	5	8	2
1	2	3	8	7	9	6	4	5
9	7	5	6	4	3	2	1	8
6	4	8	2	5	1	3	9	7

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/5

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

SNIFFING **Solution: 9 letters**

P	I	N	E	E	C	N	C	I	T	R	U	S	C	C
N	A	C	S	R	B	A	K	I	N	G	C	H	H	I
O	I	O	E	B	N	T	T	R	E	O	E	E	O	N
M	N	A	S	D	E	U	M	E	C	E	R	T	C	N
E	M	I	L	G	O	R	I	O	S	R	E	E	O	A
L	S	E	N	N	N	E	N	E	Y	N	H	E	L	M
N	L	A	S	S	E	U	T	B	G	N	E	W	A	O
R	R	E	L	A	T	A	L	O	O	E	R	S	T	N
O	B	I	M	T	M	O	L	S	S	O	B	E	E	A
C	O	Ⓐ	T	S	S	O	T	O	D	H	S	I	E	E
P	U	Ⓘ	S	S	C	R	R	O	E	N	D	P	L	C
O	Q	Ⓡ	O	I	I	S	H	A	M	P	O	O	A	O
P	U	M	A	L	L	I	N	A	V	I	G	I	H	O
R	E	D	N	E	V	A	L	F	R	E	S	H	N	K
S	T	N	A	L	P	E	R	F	U	M	E	N	I	O

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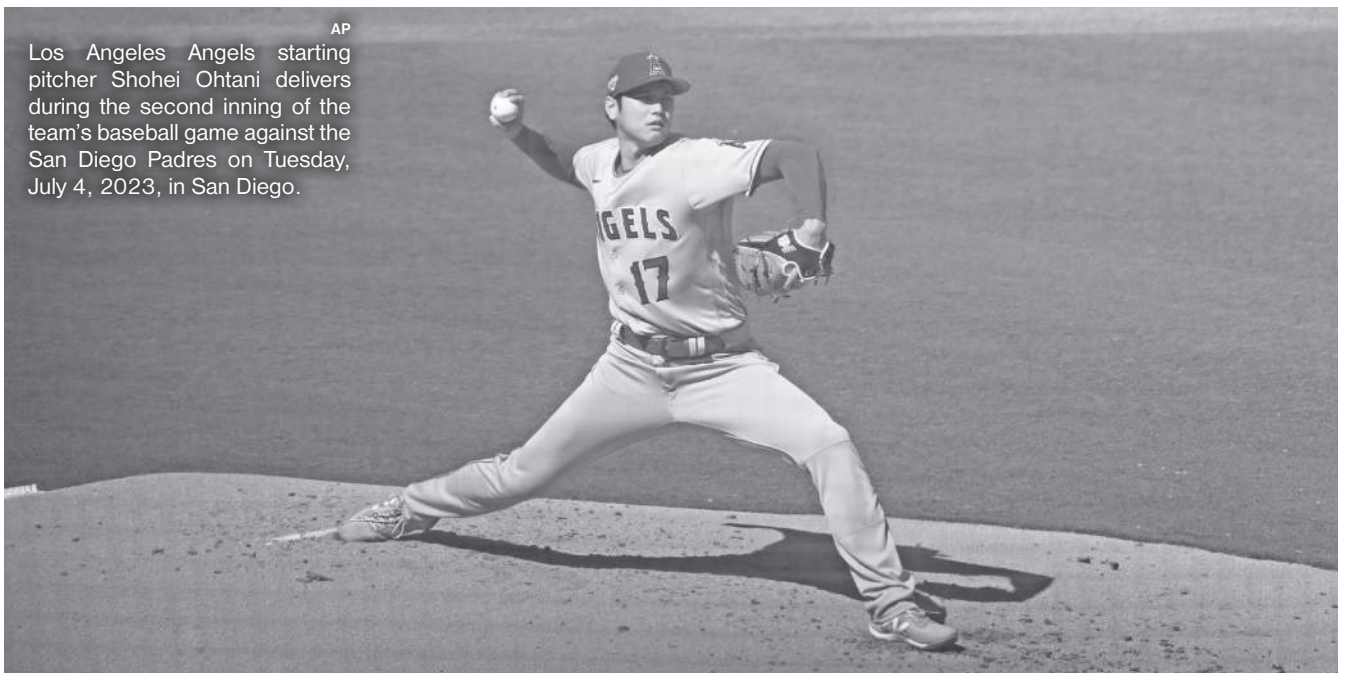
Air, Aroma, Baking, Basil, Bouquet, Candle, Cheese, Cherry Blossom, Chocolate, Cinnamon, Citrus, Coconut, Cologne, Cook, Cream, Dogs, Fresh, Herbs, Inhale, Lavender, Lemon, Lime, Lungs, Mice, Mint, Nature, Nose, Nostril, Ocean, Odor, Oils, Onion, Orange, Perfume, Pies, Pine, Plants, Popcorn, Rose, Salts, Scent, Sense, Shampoo, Smell, Snout, Soap, Sweet, Vanilla

Yesterday's Answer: Guess

To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Ohtani leaves game with blister in Angels' 8-5 loss to Padres



AP
Los Angeles Angels starting pitcher Shohei Ohtani delivers during the second inning of the team's baseball game against the San Diego Padres on Tuesday, July 4, 2023, in San Diego.

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Two-way All-Star Shohei Ohtani of the Los Angeles Angels left Tuesday's game with a blister on his right middle finger after allowing consecutive home runs to Xander Bogaerts and Jake Cronenworth in the sixth inning of an 8-5 loss to Joe Musgrove and the San Diego Padres.

Ohtani's exit came a few hours after the Angels found out they'll be without All-Star slugger Mike Trout for several weeks because of a broken left wrist.

Ohtani (7-4) allowed a line-drive, two-run homer by Bogaerts to left field and then Cronenworth's shot to right-center. A trainer came out with an interpreter to check on Ohtani and they were soon joined by manager Phil Nevin. Ohtani then exited. He allowed five runs and seven hits, struck out five and walked four.

The right-hander's start had been pushed back a day due to a cracked fingernail. He left his previous start as a pitcher but remained in the game as the designated hitter and homered, giving him 10 strikeouts and two home runs in a 4-2 win against the Chicago White Sox.

This time, Ohtani made the last out at the plate in the top of the sixth and was replaced by pinch-hitter Jo Adell at DH in the ninth.

CUBS 7, BREWERS 6, 11 innings

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Left fielder Ian Happ threw out two runners at the plate in extra innings, and the Chicago Cubs pulled out a wild 7-6 win over the Milwaukee Brewers in 11 innings Tuesday after squandering a late lead for the second consecutive game.

Dansby Swanson homered and Miguel Amaya hit a two-run double to help the Cubs build a 6-2 cushion. But the Brewers scored twice in the eighth and twice more in the ninth to tie it.

In the bottom of the 10th, pinch-runner Andruw Monasterio was placed at second base as the automatic runner. He tried to score the winning run on Owen Miller's one-out single to left but was cut down at home by Happ on a call that stood following a replay review.

GUARDIANS 6, BRAVES 5, 10 innings

CLEVELAND (AP)—David Fry had a game-ending hit and the Guardians stopped the Braves' nine-game winning streak.

Fry drove an 0-1 pitch over the head of left fielder Eddie Rosario to score José Ramírez from third base. Braves closer Raisel Iglesias (3-3) intentionally walked Andrés Giménez, bringing Fry to the plate with two outs.

Guardians center fielder Myles Straw threw out Sam Hilliard at the plate to keep the game tied in the top of the inning. Hilliard was the automatic runner and took third on a fly ball. Straw fielded Eddie Rosario's line drive and made a perfect throw to Fry at the plate for the double play.

ATHLETICS 1, TIGERS 0, 10 innings

DETROIT (AP)—Ryan Noda had an RBI single in the 10th inning as the MLB-worst Athletics edged the Tigers after being no-hit into the seventh inning.

Jace Peterson bunted pinch-runner Tyler Wade to third to start the 10th. Tyler Horton (0-1) struck out Shea Langeliers for the second out before Noda slapped a single to left — one of just two hits for Oakland in the game—to break the scoreless struggle.

PIRATES 9, DODGERS 7

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Pinch-hitter Josh Palacios hit a tiebreaking two-run double in a three-run ninth inning that rallied Pittsburgh past Los Angeles and snapped a three-game skid.

Dodgers reliever Evan Phillips (1-3) struck out Carlos Santana, then issued consecutive walks to Jack Suwinski and Nick Gonzales. Suwinski scored on Jared Triolo's single that tied it at 7. Palacios batted for Rodolfo Castro and doubled into left field, scoring Gonzales and Triolo for a 9-7 lead.

David Bednar (3-0) got five outs for the win after being added to the NL All-Star roster earlier in the day as an injury replacement.

YANKEES 8, ORIOLES 4

NEW YORK (AP)—Gleyber Torres hit a two-run homer and scored the go-ahead run from first base on Giancarlo Stanton's fifth-inning single, leading the Yankees over the Orioles.

Aaron Hicks homered in his second game back in the Bronx after Yankees released him on May 26 and Adam Frazier followed with a tying, two-run homer in a three-run fifth against Clarke Schmidt. Frazier went deep after a catchable fly by Jordan Westburg that left fielder Oswaldo Cabrera broke in on and played into a double.

With the score 3-3 in the fifth, Torres walked and was running on a full-count, two-out pitch to Stanton, who singled up the middle. Center fielder Cedric Mullins tossed the ball to second as Torres ran through third base coach Luis Rojas' stop sign and slid head-first across the plate.

TWINS 9, ROYALS 3

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Max Kepler hit a three-run homer while Kenta Maeda continued his strong comeback from the injured list for the Twins against the Royals.

Donovan Solano and Byron Buxton added back-to-back homers for Minnesota, which has won four of five after being swept in Atlanta that caused manager Rocco Baldelli to criticize his team's effort.

Maeda (2-5) made his third start since coming off the injured list for a right triceps strain. He gave up two runs and three hits in seven innings. He struck out nine. In the three starts, Maeda has given up just three earned runs in 17 innings.

MARLINS 15, CARDINALS 2

MIAMI (AP)—Jesús Sánchez homered, singled twice and had four RBIs and the Marlins beat St. Louis in another short outing by Cardinals starter Adam Wainwright.

Jorge Soler and Joey Wendle each doubled twice while Garrett Cooper also went deep and had two singles for the Marlins, who finished with a season high in runs against Wainwright and four relievers.

Marlins starter Jesús Luzardo (7-5) struck out eight in six scoreless innings.

Miami's Luis Arraez went 1-for-3 and walked twice, dropping his major league-leading batting average to .387.

REDS 8, NATIONALS 4

WASHINGTON (AP)—Brett Kennedy won his first major league appearance in five years, Elly De La Cruz went 4 for 5 with hits from both sides of the plate and the Reds beat the Nationals.

Kennedy struck out three and allowed four runs and five hits in five-plus innings, only getting into trouble late in his 86-pitch outing.

De La Cruz had three singles batting right-handed and one left-handed. The switch-hitting rookie sensation was robbed of his first career five-hit game by Nationals center fielder Derek Hill's diving catch on a line drive in the eighth.

RANGERS 6, RED SOX 2

BOSTON (AP)—Mitch Garver hit a three-run homer, Dane Dunning pitched six solid innings and the AL West-leading Texas Rangers had a rain-delayed victory over the Red Sox.

Robbie Grossman and Josh Jung each added an RBI double for the Rangers, who won for just the second time in six games. Garver also had a bases-loaded walk.

Jarren Duran had a triple and double, and Justin Turner an RBI single for Boston, which had its three-game winning streak halted.

The game was delayed for 1 hour, 47 minutes.

With a light rain falling early in the game and turning heavier in the middle innings until the umpires called for the tarp with the Red Sox batting in the eighth, the 28-year-old Dunning (8-1) kept Boston's offense in check, giving up a run and six hits with four strikeouts and a walk.

METS 8, DIAMONDBACKS 5

PHOENIX (AP)—Starling Marte hit a three-run homer, Max Scherzer struck out nine to remain undefeated in 10 straight starts and the Mets beat the Diamondbacks.

Scherzer (8-2) gave up three home runs and walked in a run in six innings, but the Mets used the long ball to help the right-hander win his sixth straight decision.

Francisco Alvarez hit a 467-foot, two-run homer off Miguel Castro (4-3) in the seventh inning to break Travis D'Arnaud's single-season team record by a rookie catcher set in 2014.

Brandon Nimmo added a solo homer to help the struggling Mets win their third straight.

PHILLIES 3, RAYS 1

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Aaron Nola tied a career-high with 12 strikeouts and beat former teammate Zach Eflin as the Phillies won their 10th consecutive road game, over the AL-leading Rays.

It's the Phillies' longest winning away from home since the 1976 club won a franchise-best 13 straight.

Nola (8-6) allowed one run and five hits over 7 1/3 innings. The last batter he faced, Wander Franco, homered. Craig Kimbrel worked the ninth and earned his 13th save in 13 chances.

ASTROS 4, ROCKIES 1

HOUSTON (AP)—Rookie Grae Kessinger hit his first career home run and fellow rookie Corey Julks had a career-high four hits to lead the Astros over the Rockies.

Julks doubled with an RBI after being inserted into the lineup at designated hitter after Jose Altuve was scratched about 90 minutes before the game with discomfort in his left oblique.

Brandon Bielak (4-4) allowed two hits in seven scoreless innings for the win. He tied a career-high by walking four batters but was helped by a defense that turned double plays in the first and fifth innings.

Mauricio Dubón had two hits, including a triple, to help the Astros extend their winning streak to three games.

MARINERS 6, GIANTS 0

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Logan Gilbert struck out seven pitching a five-hit gem for his first career complete game, Mike Ford homered during a four-hit performance and AJ Pollock added a late two-run shot as the Mariners beat the Giants for their fourth straight win.

After striking out Mike Yastrzemski swinging to end the 2-hour, 20-minute Fourth of July matinee, the 26-year-old Gilbert clapped his hand into his glove and quickly went to embrace catcher Tom Murphy.

Julio Rodríguez contributed an RBI single and doubled as the Seattle offense did plenty to back right-hander Gilbert (6-5) in his winning effort facing the Giants for the first time in his career. Seattle's four-game winning streak matches its season best with the other four-game unbeaten run coming in a sweep of Oakland from May 22-25.

BLUE JAYS 4, WHITE SOX 3

CHICAGO (AP)—Vladimir Guerrero Jr. hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning, and the Blue Jays beat the White Sox.

Guerrero gave Toronto a 4-3 lead when he connected against Joe Kelly (1-4) after Brandon Belt led off the eighth with a walk. The three-time All-Star went the opposite way on a 2-1 pitch, driving it out to right for his 13th home run.

All-Star Whit Merrifield had two hits and two RBIs, and the Blue Jays got back to winning coming off a three-game sweep by Boston.

White Sox All-Star Luis Robert Jr. made it 3-2 in the sixth with a long three-run drive against Chris Bassitt for his 25th homer. But Chicago lost again after dropping two of three at struggling Oakland.

Nate Pearson (5-1) worked the seventh. Erik Swanson pitched around a triple by Tim Anderson in the eighth.

Bradley Beal enters his 30s with Suns, says he's ready to 'chase this ring'

AP
New Phoenix Suns guard Bradley Beal answers a question during an NBA basketball news conference Thursday, June 29, 2023, in Phoenix.

PHOENIX (AP)—Bradley Beal was drafted on his 19th birthday and spent his entire 20s with the Washington Wizards, where he scored a lot of points, enjoyed a little team success, but also suffered through plenty of painful losses.

On Wednesday, he turned 30. Not a bad time for a new chapter in the three-time All-Star's life and basketball career.

Beal was introduced as a member of the Phoenix Suns on Thursday at the Footprint Center, more than a week after he waived a no-trade clause that allowed him to be sent to the desert in exchange for Chris Paul, Landry Shamet and a package of future draft picks.

"I feel refreshed, I feel rejuvenated," Beal said. "This is an exciting moment for me. This is an awesome team."

Beal is now part of one of the NBA's most star-packed starting lineups, including 13-time All-Star Kevin Durant, three-time All-Star Devin Booker and former No. 1 draft pick Deandre Ayton. They've also got a new coach in Frank Vogel, who led the Los Angeles Lakers to a title in 2020.

"Bradley Beal is one of the best players in the NBA," Vogel said. "We're thrilled to have him be a Phoenix Sun with KD and Book. That forms a trio of three of the most prolific scorers in the game. A great two-way center, one of the best two-way centers in the game.

"These pieces are a great foundation for what we hope will be a championship run for this franchise."

Beal's arrival marks the latest big move for new owner Mat Ishbia, who has had an extremely eventful tenure since purchasing the franchise from the embattled Robert Sarver in February. Almost immediately after he was introduced, he approved the team's big deal to land Durant at the trade deadline.

A few months later, he got into a brief sideline spat with Nuggets star Nikola Jokic during a playoff game. (The two have since made up.)

Now Ishbia and general manager James Jones have swung a deal that brings Beal and his big scoring numbers across the country. The three-time All-Star has averaged at least 20 points per game in each of the past seven seasons, including a career-high 31.3 points per game during the 2020-21 season.

Beal never got past the second round of the playoffs with the Wizards, but still has plenty of fond memories of his tenure in the nation's capital.

"I have a lot of emotional ties to that city, my family was established there," Beal said. "So I just want to take a moment to thank the city of D.C., thank the organization for allowing this partnership to happen."

But Beal also admits he's excited about his new challenge. The sharpshooting guard was often the Wizards' main scoring option, but in Phoenix, he'll be sharing the load with several other stars.

The Suns are trying to win their first championship since coming to the NBA in 1968. They've lost in the Finals three times — in 1976, 1993 and 2021.

"I'm excited to play with two Hall of Famers, I've never done that," Beal said. "I'm excited what that brings. They'll push me in ways I've never been pushed and hopefully I'll do the same."

Beal's arrival also means the Suns will have to engage in some salary cap gymnastics to fill out their roster. The foursome of Durant, Beal, Booker and Ayton will make more than $160 million next season.

A summer of bargain hunting on the free agent market awaits, but that's a problem to worry about another day.

For now, Beal and the Suns are relishing a roster that looks like it will be among the very best in the league during the upcoming season.

"Hopefully, we can chase this ring," Beal said.

Suns agree to terms with 6 players to fill out roster

PHOENIX (AP)—The Phoenix Suns are moving quickly to fill in the roster around their three All-Stars.

The Suns agreed to terms with sharpshooter Yuta Watanabe, big men Chimezie Metu and Drew Eubanks, and wing Keita Bates-Diop on Friday, a person with knowledge of the negotiations told The Associated Press.

Phoenix also agreed on deals to re-sign wings Damion Lee and Josh Okogie, the person said on condition of anonymity because the deals had not been announced publicly.

The new players will give the Suns depth behind Devin Booker, Kevin Durant and Bradley Beal, who was traded from Washington earlier this month.

Watanabe will give Phoenix an extra shooter off the bench after shooting 44% from 3-point range while averaging 5.6 points with Brooklyn last season. He is reunited with Durant, traded by the Nets to the Suns at the trade deadline last season.

Bates-Diop played the last four seasons with San Antonio, averaging 9.7 points in 2022-23.

The 6-foot-9 Metu played the last three seasons with Sacramento, averaging 4.9 points on a team that reached the playoffs for the first time in 17 years last season. Eubanks, also 6-9, averaged 6.6 points with Portland last season.

Lee played 72 games for the Suns last season, averaging 8.2 points. Okogie averaged 7.3 points in his first season with the Suns after playing four years for Minnesota.

Porzingis excited to join talented Celtics roster as Boston continues to retool

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
AP SPORTS WRITER

Celtics president of basketball operations Brad Stevens vowed that changes were on the way after a season that began with championship expectations ended short of a return to the NBA Finals.

Boston took its first steps to ushering in its latest era with the introduction of Kristaps Porzingis on Thursday.

Porzingis said the team's faith in him is motivating as he begins his fourth stop in the league.

"It's the most exciting feeling that you can get," he said. "Just the idea of that. ... It made it super easy. It made (the Celtics) my complete, favorite option."

The Celtics netted the 7-foot-3 forward from the Washington Wizards the night before the NBA draft, executing a three-team trade that also included Marcus Smart—who'd been Boston's most-tenured veteran—heading to the Memphis Grizzlies.

The decision to part with Smart, the 2022 Defensive Player of the Year and the team's vocal leader, was one that coach Joe Mazzulla called "tough." He said he spoke with Smart shortly after the deal was completed.

"I was able to talk to him, and I just told him that I love him and I appreciate who he is as a person," Mazzulla said. "You're never going to replace a guy like him."

But Boston is hoping the addition of Porzingis, the fourth pick of the 2015 draft coming off one of his best NBA seasons statistically, can bring a different dynamic playing alongside All-Stars Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown. They will now constitute the lead trio of a group that also includes veterans Derrick White, Malcolm Brogdon and Al Horford, along with fellow big man Robert Williams.

Porzingis said the success of the current group and history of the Celtics franchise is what excited him most about the trade.

"The opportunity to play for a really good team already, and to be able to add to that and hopefully to help these guys make their lives even easier ... made it extremely easy for me to make that decision," Porzingis said.

The Celtics also are likely not done, despite already having entered into luxury tax territory by signing Porzingis, who exercised his $36 million player option for next season prior to the trade.

Stevens said he's been given the "green light" by team owners to make necessary tweaks to the roster in free agency.

The team will also need to try to figure out a possible extension for Porzingis as he enters the final year of his current deal. In addition, on July 6 Brown will also be eligible to receive a contract extension worth $295 million.

"We're trying to win and everybody is very supportive of that from the top down," Stevens said. "We're going to try to put our best foot forward and do that. The required part is the right talent to build around it. We're very fortunate to have a lot of talented players. ... We've got guys under contract here that are really good players. Building a team that fits around that in the best way we can is what we're trying to do."

Wembanyama, Mbappé big draws as Olympic soccer, basketball tickets go on sale

PARIS (AP)—Fans hoping to watch major French stars like Victor Wembanyama and Kylian Mbappé play at next year's Paris Olympics could drive up demand when more tickets go on sale Wednesday for four sports that will be staged far from the French capital.

Fans worldwide will be able to buy tickets on a first-come, first-served basis for soccer, basketball, handball and sailing, which are all held regional venues at next year's Summer Games.

The prospect for French fans to watch wildly popular home favorites such as Wembanyama and Mbappé is sure to boost sales even though the Paris Olympics' reputation has taken a hit from an ongoing investigation by prosecutors in the city about how contracts have been awarded.

Wembanyama, the NBA's recent No. 1 draft pick, is expected to take part in the Olympic basketball tournament held in Lille. Soccer games are spread across six French cities, with France's men's team playing its first game in Marseille—which also hosts sailing.

Organizers said they originally planned to release those tickets later this year but have brought it forward because of strong demand for five million tickets sold in the first two phases. They were sold to fans worldwide who had to enter a lottery and hope to be allocated the right to buy at prices from 24 euros ($26).

Mbappé, who scored a hat trick in last year's World Cup final loss to Argentina in Qatar, could be the star attraction for France's soccer team. Although it remains unclear if his club—whether he stays at Paris Saint-Germain or moves to Real Madrid—will allow him to take part in the Olympics.

"I always said that it was my dream to play in the Olympic Games," Mbappé said last month.

Soccer games start two days before the July 26 opening ceremony in Paris, and will also be played in Bordeaux, Lyon and Nantes, plus in Paris at PSG's Parc des Princes stadium.

Basketball's group-stage games for men and women will be played in Lille, about three hours' drive northeast of Paris, in the city's 50,000-seat soccer stadium. The same Pierre Mauroy Stadium also stages men's and women's team handball through the end of the Olympics.

Basketball moves to Paris itself when the knockout rounds start.

Ticket sales represent about a third of the operating budget for the Paris Olympics organizers, which is estimated to be at least 4.4 billion euros ($4.8 billion). Billions more will be spent on construction and security.

2023 BASA MVP's and awardees announced

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The MVP's of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League were announced during the championship awards ceremony held at the DanDan Softball Field last Sunday.

Joey Dela Cruz, first baseman of the championship team Man Amigos, won the men's division MVP, while Angel Deleon Guerrero, pitcher of the women's division championship team Lady Blue Jays, won the women's division MVP award.

For Deleon Guerrero, she said of her award, "Softball has been a part of my life since I was a young child. Receiving the MVP award was such a remarkable achievement. I feel incredibly fortunate and appreciative, especially for the women I've played with this season. I was able to perform the way I did because of their greatness and skills."

"We also wouldn't have made it as far without our coaches who understood the importance of balancing making the game fun, but serious. Last, but never least, I give thanks to Jesus!" she added.

The BASA board first announced the team awards with Man Amigos taking home the men's division title and the Lady Blue Jays sweeping the women's division.

LEIGH GASES

Man Amigos' Joey Dela Cruz holds his MVP trophy during the awards ceremony of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League at the DanDan Softball Field last Sunday.

LEIGH GASES

Lady Blue Jays' Angel Deleon Guerrero shows off her MVP trophy of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League during the awards ceremony after the championships last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

The men's division runner-up went to Peleliu, while the women's division runner-up went to the Hot Shots.

After, the men's division regular season champions Sufa was awarded for their 8-2 top seed record; the regular season runner-up went to Peleliu for their 7-3 record; third place went to Asahi; the Sportsmanship Award went to team Tuturamz; and the regular season MVP went to Sufa's Audie Maratita.

In the women's division regular season awards, the Lady Blue Jays won the pennant; the runner-up went to the Hot Shots; third place went to the Lady Legals; the Sportsmanship Award went to Lady Sufa; and the regular season MVP went to Kiana "Baby K" Camacho.

Individual awards were also given to the top players of the season.

The batting champion in the men's division was Man Amigos' Eric Palacios who went 21 for 27 at-bats for a .778 batting average.

In the women's division, Kiana Camacho was the batting champion with a .607 average from 17 out of 28 at-bats.

The men's runs scored champion was a tie between Wazzup's Joe Lizama and Hagu La'mun's Dennis Cruz with 20 each.

Kiana Camacho and Tiah Camacho were tied for first in the runs scored category with 12 each.

The doubles champion in the men's division was Hagu La'mun's Tim Wesley with 10; and Kiana Camacho won again with five doubles.

The triples champion was Aimeliik 1 Time's Ben Higgins with four and Hot Shots' Mardina Kaipat won with three.

The most home runs went to Maratita with nine, while the Lady Blue Jay's Rachel Salalila won with four.

Maratita also won the RBI champion award with 30, while Kiana Camacho completed her trophy haul with 14 RBIs.

On Kiana Camacho's achievements, she said "It's unbelievably incredible to receive such amazing achievements because they validate us and help us feel more confident. This season felt so fast but it was great playing with the best players in the league and making more memorable moments."

She did acknowledge that "some of us are overly focused on the outcome, a perfect season, maintaining an unbeaten streak. It can be emotionally draining. You become solely focused on not ruining the streak but really I'm more focused on playing the game of my life."

The pitching leaders were awarded with Tokahao's Eric David winning the earned run average award at only 2.63 per game. In the women's division, Deleon Guerrero won with a 2.74 ERA.

The last award—the strikeout champion—went to Aimeliik 1 Time's Ken Kaipat with 33, while the Hot Shots' Janice Celis won with 36.

ANNE

From page 20

to compete in the 2023 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships.

Lee is part of the 11U/13U Pacific Oceania Team that competed in the 2023 Australian Junior Championship in Gold Coast, Australia recently.

The team arrived in Fiji last June 28 for the aforementioned camp that bridges the gap between the Australia tournament and the start of the POJC.

Vanuatu's Lorraine Banimataku and Fiji's Sachin Reddy served as assistant coaches to de Gouy.

The team of nine players began the camp with a two-session training program at the Nadi Sports and Social Club and the program is set to run until July 8.

As for the 2023 Australian Junior Championship, Lee concluded her stint on a sour note as she and Colita Hakena of Papua New Guinea lost to Australia's Karin Hiramatsu and Jovana Novakovic, 6-2. 6-0, last June 26. Pacific Oceania thus finished seventh in the age group.

Lee's trip to Australia to compete in the 2023 Australian Junior Championship and subsequent invite to the Nadi training camp was made through funding from the Grand Slam Player Development Programme.

TAKE

From page 20

aside from their swimming coach, he feels like a second father to Batallones and Litulumar as he has trained them from a young age.

"I've been coaching Shoko since age 5 and Maria since age 4. In their lives, apart from their family, the person they spend the most time with is me without fail."

Kimura said he has high hopes for both his wards to set new CNMI records in the 2023 FINA World Championships.

"Shoko is the frontrunner for Tsunami Saipan's future captain. Backstroke is her No. 1 style and her target this time is to break the 50m backstroke CNMI record of 33.73 that Nina Mosely marked in 2007. Though it was a short course race in Melbourne in December, Shoko was very close to Nina's time. Shoko has improved considerably this half a year, we can expect a lot from her."

He also expects nothing less from Batallones.

"Maria is truly a heavensent child of Tsunami Saipan's breastroke. Tsunami Saipan has produced so many CNMI breastroke record-holders that people think of us as a breastroke team. Rezne Wong, Kai Staal, Kensuke Kimura, Ryosei Toda, Kaito Yanai, Angel Marie Tan, Lukas Kang, Ryuto Yanai, Shigeki Tenorio, Nanaka Watanabe, Maria Batallones, and Juhn Tenorio are just some of the club's breastroke record-breakers."

Kimura said Batallones' first record was the 8-and-under 50m breastroke, which broke fellow Tsunami Saipan swimmer Nanaka Watanabe's record.

"We believed Nanaka's record would not be broken for 10 years at least, but it was super surprising that Maria broke it only two years later. In this World Champs, Maria aims to break the CNMI national record in the 50m breastroke. She already marked 1.5 seconds faster than the CNMI national record in Melbourne though it was the short course time. But it will almost certainly break Nina Mosely's record of 36.81."

Kimura said it won't be farfetched for Batallones and Litulumar to challenge Mosely's record at this World Championships.

"Nina was a swimmer with a very good physique. Huge power was created by her height of nearly 180 cm and her splendid muscles. Compared to Nina, Shoko and Maria are petite swimmers. For shorter swimmers, to compete against bigger swimmers, we have no choice but to brush up their swimming skills because we can never compete with their power. If these two petite girls set a record, it would really be amazing," he said.

Batallones, for her part, said she's honored to be again representing the CNMI in the 20th FINA World Championships and that it's an honor to be teammates once again with Litulumar.

"We've been doing this for as long as I can remember. Ever since we were little it has always been us! It's so exciting continuing to do this with her and coach Hiro. It's something I'll remember for a lifetime. Both of their hard work has really brought us to big places together. So, it is always an honor to be able to represent the CNMI with them."

Litulumar, meanwhile, is excited to compete with Batallones again on the world stage. She's also excited to visit the Land of the Rising Sun "because Japan is a country that has so many top swimmers that I look up to and swimming with them makes me excited."

As for training, both Batallones and Litulumar said Kimura has put them under a very vigorous training regimen to prepare them for the FINA World Championships.

"Training has been going good. It's hard and challenging, but I know it's needed for us to be able to display our best abilities. My personal goal for Japan is to set a personal best time for both of my events (50m breaststroke and 50m butterfly) and to hopefully be able to set a new record. Another goal is to do good in our relays and set faster times than previous relay times. My last goal is to make unforgettable memories and to make use of this opportunity," said Batallones.

"My coach stepped up the training so now it's more deadly. Because of the deadly workouts, I can feel myself improve. My personal goals are to get 33 off my 50m back and to cut 30 in my 50m free," said Litulumar.

Batallones, Litulumar, and Kimura will be joined in the FINA World Championships by Isaiah Aleksenko and Jakey Deleon Guerrero. They leave for Japan on June 17.

HAS-BEENS

From page 20

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. for their hard work, Dr. Ron Snyder for the encouragement, and to all the officials, organizers, and volunteers for their dedication and hard work. "Your contributions behind the scenes are essential. Special thanks to my family, co-workers and friends who supported me.

Nick Gross, who is no stranger to competition and a life-long athlete, said that he had a great experience all around. Not only did he compete in the Masters Championships, he also competed in the concurrent Oceania Cup.

He said, "Having the opportunity to host athletes from 23 different countries and compete with and witness these incredible athletes was awesome!"

He added, "On a personal note, in the masters events, it is really a good time as your times and distances are measured against your peers in the same five-year window. Overall, we had a blast and look forward to building our Masters capacity throughout the NMI."

Gross said of the competition and with competing against other masters athletes, "The masters events are unique in that it allows older, has-been athletes, the opportunity to compete and enjoy the benefits of competition… even when the distances and times are not always that incredible, although there were some great performances from many of the NMI masters group."

James Lee, who hasn't participated in any track and field events since the 2002 Micro Games, said that he had a great experience in this Oceania Masters Championship and that it was like going down memory lane.

He said on what was his favorite event that he joined, "It was really fun to be able to participate in all the events that I did but if I have to choose then the sprints for both 60m and 100m would be it. I wish I had the chance to train for it though just to see how I can really perform. Next time."

Competing against other athletes who have competed in the sport their whole life was an honor, he added and said that it motivated him to come back to the sport and compete again. He thanked everyone who put the event together and said jokingly, "I want to thank Robin [Sapong] for giving me a call to participate a week before the event. Next time at least give me a month so I can train a little for it. Joking aside, thank you Robin, Ed [Dela Cruz], and coach Eli [Rangamar].

Ohtani leaves game with blister in Angels' 8-5 loss to Padres.

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

2023 BASA MVP's and awardees announced.

PAGE 19

Take 2 for Maria, Shoko in World Champs

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

National swimming coach Hiro Kimura and national swimmers Maria Batallones and Shoko Litulumar will have a reunion of sorts in the 20th FINA World Championships in Fukuoka, Japan this month.

The three already wore the CNMI's colors in the 2022 FINA World Championships in Melbourne, Australia in December last year.

"This is my second time representing the CNMI on a team with these two girls following Melbourne. Each of us has been to off-island meets so many times. I participated in Micronesian Championships and Guam Championships with Shoko and Tokyo Junior Sprint and Guam Championships with Maria. Shoko has won many championships in the Micronesian Champs. Maria was too young to go to the Micro Champ then, but she was an overall champion at Guam Champs every year," said Kimura.

The Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center head coach said

See TAKE on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI national swimmers Maria Batallones, left, and Shoko Litulumar pose following a recent training session with national coach Hiro Kimura.

Anne Lee learning the ropes in Nadi

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Anne Lee has followed up her stint in the 2023 Australian Teams Championships in Australia by taking part in a training camp for 13-and-under netters from Pacific Oceania in Nadi, Fiji.

The training camp is conducted by coaching expert Gilles de Gouy and was made possible by the International Tennis Federation's Grand Slam Player Development Programme in collaboration with the Oceania Tennis Federation.

"I have been learning some approach shots with my backhand and forearms and also learned the proper way to serve," said Lee in a social media message to the *Saipan Tribune*.

So far, the 12-year-old student from Saipan International School has been enjoying her training in Fiji.

"It is a bit hot, but it is pretty good. I've been staying at someone's house for a bit while, but I am going to move to the facility where Team CNMI will be staying after a few days," she said.

Team CNMI will be flying into Fiji at week's end

See ANNE on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI's Anne Lee, right, takes part in drills during the training camp for the 13-and-under Pacific Oceania team in Nadi, Fiji.

'Has-beens' share great experience in Oceania Championships

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The masters athletes who participated in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships from June 22 to 26 were challenged, but overall had a great experience in their run, jump, and throwing events at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

They showed that old age doesn't preclude you from competing and putting yourself out there on the big stage against not just your home islands—but against other islands as well.

The age range for the championships ranged from 30 years old to the oldest competitor at 80 years old.

The CNMI's Jeanne Rayphand was the oldest competitor and didn't let the hot and humid Saipan summer or her age stop her from putting on a show for spectators.

She raced as fast as she could through the 60m event to bring home her first gold medal and also made her way around the track for another gold in the 10,000m race/walk event.

Rayphand said that the competition "was a challenging and fun experience, particularly meeting other competitors." She added with a laugh, "Being the oldest competitor was funny and everyone was so nice and considerate and tolerant of my slowness."

She left this tidbit of advice for those older people wanting to keep fit or even wanting to compete, "One, it's never too late; and two, keep walking, don't stop, and get guidance from an experienced trainer and coach each step of the way toward developing competition skills."

The 80-year-old then thanked John Davis, president of the CNMI Weightlifting Federation, for her current health and ability to participate in these competitions. "Many years ago he trained, coached, guided me to first walk and then jog and eventually run some distances, something I had not done since sixth grade," she said.

Sheila Isla, who competed in the 40-44 age group, hauled in two gold and four bronze medals.

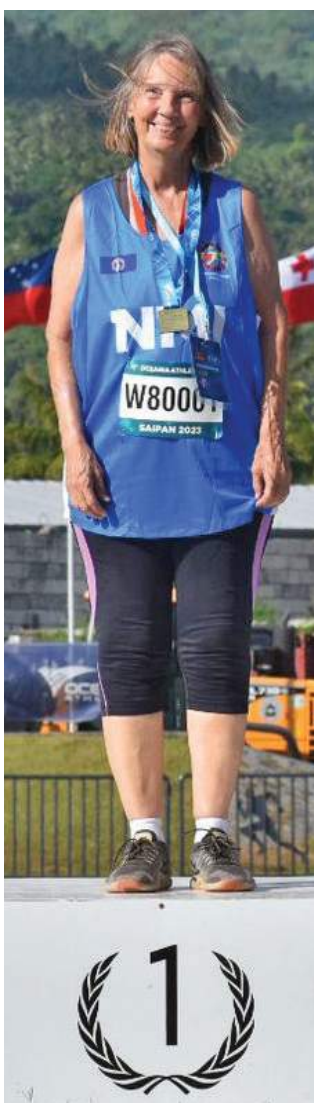
For her first international competition and as an older athlete, she said she is grateful to have been a part of it and given a chance to represent Team NMI. "I'm so grateful to be able to compete in these events that need strength, determination, and perseverance."

She said her personal favorite and personal best race was the 1,500m and said that running everyday since Jan. 1 helped her a lot in the competition.

The competition, she said, "was a friendly and fair play competition for all the masters athletes because of each age category for men and women. It's a well-organized competition."

She then thanked Oceania Athletics Association president Robin Sapong, Oceania Masters president Ruth Mave, and

See HAS-BEENS on Page 19



LEIGH GASES

At 80 years old, the CNMI's Jeanne Rayphand was the oldest competitor in the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships that was held from June 22 to 26 at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.